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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

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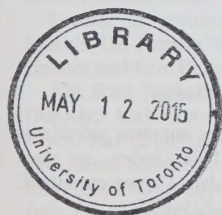
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# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 4 May 2015

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 4 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 4 May 2015

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd like to introduce Sue Christensen, who is here from my riding of Perth—Wellington.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's a great honour and a privilege for me to have my parents with us today, as well as my sister and brother-in-law and my niece, Allison. I'd like to welcome Wayne Crack, Sylvia Crack, Shelley Todd, Bob Todd and Allison Todd to the Legislature today.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd just like to welcome my wife to the Legislature again. It just happens to be our 25th anniversary. One of her friends said she's putting her in for the Order of Canada. Anyways, welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sure there are several one-liners that came to people's minds.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, I'm sorry, I forgot to mention her name—it might help—Carole Paikin-Miller.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** We have several members from the Canadian Mental Health Association and the CEO of the Central LHIN here with us today in the gallery for the mental health bus launch taking place right outside Queen's Park after question period. I want to take this opportunity to invite all members for a photo op in front of the mental health bus, acknowledging that this is Mental Health Week.

I want to introduce Camille Quenneville, Rebecca Shields, Dr. Pamela Wilansky, Alexandra Trottier, Arthur Gallant and Kim Baker.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Today's page captain Luca Riccio-Durocher hails from the great riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex. His family is here today to support him: his parents, Yves Durocher and Dina Riccio, as well his sister, Ella Riccio-Durocher, and his grandparents, Tino and Judy Riccio. Welcome to Queen's Park.

### MEMBER'S ANNIVERSARY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On May 2, 1985, the 33rd Parliament was elected. I'd like to bring to your attention that Saturday was the anniversary of the 31st year for the member from York Centre, Monte Kwinter. Congratulations.

Not quite a record this time, because the member from St. Catharines has been serving a little longer.

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 4 mai 2015

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Monte holds his own record.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Monte has a record of his own. Thank you.

### WEARING OF RIBBONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services, on a point of order.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear ribbons in recognition of Children's Mental Health Week.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services is seeking unanimous consent to wear the ribbons, which I'm told are available for all members on both sides. Do we agree? Agreed.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal Party formed government in 2003, they were handed a model for winter road maintenance. That model kept Ontario roads safe and was cost-effective.

Then Minister of Transportation Jim Bradley—and, subsequently, Minister Wynne—abandoned that model. As the Auditor General noted, the Premier, as transportation minister, chose contractors “on the basis of the lowest-priced bid.”

Premier, you made the decision to put Ontarians' lives at risk to save a few bucks. Will you now take responsibility for the dangerous winter roads created under your watch and apologize to the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Transportation is going to want to comment on the details, but let me just say that I—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Don't tell us we've got the safest roads, because they could be safer.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** A lot safer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, come to order. The member from Nepean—Carleton, come to order.

I didn't quite get the one on this side. Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would just say to the member opposite that we're very grateful to the Auditor General for her recommendations. In fact, internal review had already begun, and there were already changes that



were in the works. Following the internal review, the Ministry of Transportation and its maintenance contractors have been working together to improve the quality.

I will say that, as far back as when I was the Minister of Transportation, I was asking questions about the standards. I was asking questions about the adequacy of the contracts, and we were looking at whether there were changes that needed to be made. Those changes are being made, and we accept the Auditor General's recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Again to the Premier: Mr. Speaker, the companies the Premier picked to clear the roads used less equipment, less material, patrolled less often and were unable to meet even the minimum requirements.

When the opposition brought this important issue to the government's attention, the entire Liberal caucus shrugged it off. Minister Murray blamed the traffic accidents on snow-covered highways as an act of God. Minister Bentley said, "It's the weather."

But now we know that ministry staff brought their serious concerns to the Premier's attention, serious concerns which the Premier ignored and put people's lives in danger.

Premier, how many people's lives were you willing to risk to save a few bucks in the winter months?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As the Premier mentioned in the response to the first question, prior to the public accounts committee asking for the auditor to go in and conduct her review—back in 2013, the Ministry of Transportation undertook an internal review. I mentioned this last week when I responded to questions on this very subject.

As a result of the internal review—and I want to stress that this occurred before the auditor was even asked to go and do her work—combined, we brought 105 new pieces of equipment to both northern and southern Ontario. We appointed a director of maintenance, five area engineers and 20 area inspectors. We expanded our winter safe driving campaign. Also, we reached out to the area maintenance contractors to make sure that they understood exactly what the contractual obligations were.

We thank the auditor for her report. We'll move forward with all eight of her recommendations.

I look forward to having a chance to respond to additional questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Again to the Premier: When questioned about the Liberal government's road maintenance contracts, minister after minister ignored the problem.

Minister Murray told this House that "we get good value for tax dollars...."

Minister Chiarelli said, "Our contractors are required to meet ministry standards. We monitor their work...."

The Auditor General made it clear that this government made our roads less safe.

1040

The Liberal government has had five Ministers of Transportation since 2010, and I have yet to hear one of them apologize to the families who lost loved ones on Ontario highways in accidents that could have been prevented if this government had been doing its job.

Premier, why won't you take responsibility and apologize for your government's dismal record and putting Ontarians' lives at risk?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the leader for that question. In addition to what I said in the initial question, as a result of some of the other steps we've taken, for the next winter season, 28 more roadside cameras will be in place to monitor road conditions. We'll provide dedicated funding to increase the use of de-icing liquids as appropriate.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What website do I go to?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay will come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Subject to approvals, because these are measures that were brought forward in budget 2015, we'll have new equipment in place—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're going to do it again. Member from Essex.

Carry on.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** We will also work with our contractors to add dedicated spreaders for sand and salt, both in selected areas of northern Ontario as needed and also in congested urban areas.

I'd also point out that, in fact, it was my immediate predecessor, the member from Toronto Centre, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, who actually asked for the internal review in 2013 before the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Last week's auditor's report on winter road maintenance points directly at the continued lack of accountability being shown by your government and, more specifically, by you yourself.

For five years, your government knowingly risked the lives of Ontario motorists to save a few bucks. For five years, continued lax standards meant uncleared roads that were the direct result of your government's flawed cost-cutting contracts.

Premier, you were Minister of Transportation for two of those five years. Admit it. You knew about it and you did nothing about it. Can you tell those families forever



impacted by your government's lack of oversight when you, as transportation minister, first knew about the impacts and why you failed to act?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, Mr. Speaker, the premise of the member's question is absolutely not accurate.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark—

**Premier Wynne:** The fact is, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark, come to order; the member from Stormont, come to order; and the member from Oxford, come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just to put this in perspective, when I first became Minister of Transportation, one of the things I did was, I visited area offices. I asked questions about the contracts and, quite frankly, I asked questions of our staff to make sure that the standards that had been in place before the Conservative government put their new model in place were the same standards as we were using after the contracts were put in place. That was a fundamental question that I asked repeatedly.

There were concerns that were raised, and the reason there was a review that was begun in 2013 was that we had started to ask questions about whether there needed to be changes made to make sure the system that had been put in place by them was actually working.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Oh, now, Premier, you changed the standards. You watered them down to the point where you put Ontarians' lives at risk. You did that. You asked the questions, but you failed to actually listen to the people, and I'll tell you why. What's most concerning is that, in fact, your government did know. The auditor's report uncovers the fact that ministry staff were sounding the warning bells, but government failed to listen. You failed to listen.

Page 26 of the report provides a list of some of the concerns from ministry staff. Here are three:

The equipment complement does not appear to be adequate.

There is insufficient equipment to service all lanes.

The route may have insufficient equipment to plow all lanes and shoulders on the 401.

How many of these concerns were raised to then-Transportation Minister Kathleen Wynne, and why did you fail to act?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Transportation is going to want to speak to some specifics, but the member opposite will recognize that the very reason we were buying more equipment and we were putting more inspectors in place was because we wanted to make sure that our record of having the safest roads in North America—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark: second time.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay: second time.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The very reason, Mr. Speaker, that more equipment was bought and that there was an internal review begun was to make sure that we retained our record of having the safest roads in North America, because we knew that we were capable of having that standard in place. That's the standard that we will retain.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Premier, you're five years way too late.

We're talking about the safety of Ontario motorists. We're talking about preventable fatalities that government failed to guard against.

On November 3, 2010, you boasted in this House, "We obviously work with the regional offices to make sure that the oversight of those contracts is in place." So why weren't you listening when those same regional offices told you they just weren't working?

Again, you stood in the House and told us, "We wouldn't be doing this if safety were at question. We wouldn't be doing it if quality was going to go down." Well, last week the auditor made it very clear: Quality did go down, and the safety of Ontario motorists was in fact put at risk.

Premier, I'll give you one more chance. Come clean today. What did you know, and why did you fail to act?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member for that question. In addition to what I said earlier in response to his leader, with respect to the internal review from 2013 which led to the 105 additional pieces of equipment and all those other positive steps that we took—which, by the way, were acknowledged in the auditor's report last week with respect to showing progress—last week I announced that within 60 days, I will report back on additional findings from an internal review that we're conducting.

Secondly, Speaker, in order to make sure that we drive accountability on this, because it is an important issue, I have asked the auditor to come back within one year, at the end of winter 2015-16, and provide an update so as to gauge all of our progress.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier and her government have hit a new level of arrogance in this province. Debate on the sale of Hydro One has just begun, there has not been a minute of committee hearing and the Premier hasn't asked a single Ontarian what they think about her plan, and yet the Premier has handed out the first tranche of shares already.



Listen up on those back benches, because she has told every one of your constituents that she doesn't care what they think, because the deal is already done.

Will the Premier explain how it is that she has already begun the sale of Hydro One, without any concern of what happens in this House or for what Ontarians have to say?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, let me just say to the leader of the third party that she knows full well that there will be consultations on the budget document and that she knows full well that there will be standard committee hearings and there will be a discussion about what is in the budget around the province.

She also knows full well, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a very robust discussion about the need for investment in infrastructure in this province. That's what underpins our decision. It underpinned our decision to review the assets of this province. It underpins our decision to broaden the ownership in Hydro One, so that we can invest in the roads and the bridges and the transit that are needed around this province. We know that if we're going to thrive economically, we need that infrastructure to bring business to Ontario so that businesses can move their goods and so that people can get home and spend time with their families. That's the underpinning of our decision.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's no wonder the Premier wants to ram the budget through committee. The Premier has no intention of listening to anything that is actually said there, no interest in anything that any Ontarian thinks about this deal.

New Democrats have been asking Ontarians what they think. More than 20,000 Ontarians have sent the Premier a message that they don't want to pay the price for this bad decision.

In fact, Cory Campbell, vice-president of the Huron-Bruce Liberal riding association, has an online petition of his own, with 30,000 signatures calling to keep Hydro One public.

Will the Premier commit to hearing from all Ontarians, take the committee hearings outside of this city and abandon her plan to ram her Harper-style omnibus budget through the committee?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, let's just look at the facts here. People have to have an opportunity to speak to the budget. That's why there has been a proposal to both opposition House leaders that we would increase the standard committee consideration to six days.

1050

But what I really want to do is I want to talk about what has happened in the past. In 2002, under the PC government, there were zero days of consideration for the budget. In 2000, there were two days. In 1997, there were two days. In 1996, there were two days—all of those under the PCs. Under the NDP, in both 1991 and 1992, there was one day of committee consideration.

We're proposing six days more than the norm, so we want to hear from the people of the province.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not specific, but I did hear something unparliamentary, and I'd like the member to stand and withdraw; if not, you've got my message.

Carry on.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, for someone who promised to be open and transparent, inclusive and consultative, this Premier ought to be ashamed of herself. This level of arrogance and contempt for Ontarians is unprecedented in this province.

The Premier has said she will exhaustively study where she can sell a 12 of Bud Light. Should it be the LCBO? Should it be Walmart? How many bottles should be in the case? Where on the shelf should that case be situated? I can see how these are very weighty questions that must keep the Premier up every single night. But will the Premier commit to take the same amount of time, the same due diligence, to study and consult with the people across this province before she sells off their Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just on top of what I said about the need to hear from people in committee hearings on the budget, which we are doing in a much more complete way than the previous parties have done, we also ran on a plan. It was in our platform; it was in our budget. We said that we need to build infrastructure in this province. We took that to the people of the province, and we said, "Do you think you need new roads and bridges and transit?" We asked that question for—how long was our campaign?

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** For 42 days. We talked about those issues across the province, and we said, "In order to do that, we have to review the assets of this province. We have to leverage them in order to make sure we have the money." We asked that question to the people of Ontario. They said, "Yes, we need infrastructure." They said, "Yes, go ahead and make those decisions, because without that infrastructure, this province is not going to thrive."

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** No; I'm sorry. This is my second question, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier as well. The Liberals have been claiming for months now—in fact, the Premier just did it again a moment ago—that all the money from the privatization of hydro will go to build infrastructure and transit. Yet the first shares are out the door and not one of them—none of that money—is going to go towards the construction of a single kilometre of road or a single subway tunnel.



The Premier didn't need that money from the sale of Hydro One to build transit, and she knows that she doesn't have to sell off any of Hydro One to build infrastructure. So will she stop the charade, stop the spin and stop the wrong-headed sale of Hydro One once and for all?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the leader of the third party, then, to enlighten us on how we would go ahead with the projects that we've laid out in our budget. How exactly would she suggest that we electrify the GO Transit system and that we increase service to full-time two-way GO? How exactly would she suggest that we fund and execute the Hamilton LRT? How exactly would she suggest that we get started on extending natural gas access for people in our rural communities?

The fact is, the money that we are going to be able to leverage by going over our assets and making the very difficult decisions that we have made, whether it's the selling of GM shares, whether it's the selling of real estate or whether it's the broadening of the ownership of Hydro One—that money is going into those infrastructure builds. I'd like to know what her plan is.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

I've made it clear that when I stand, it does get quiet. And when we get quiet, we allow the person to put the question. So I'm going to tell the member from Beaches–East York to come to order.

Carry on.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The fact is that there's nothing in the Premier's budget bill to guarantee that the money from the sale of Hydro One goes into transit and infrastructure.

The Premier has said, "Don't worry. Just trust me. You have my word." In fact, I would recommend the backbenchers actually read the budget bill, because it does not guarantee that that money goes into transit and infrastructure.

While she's standing there making that very promise, her ministers are off handing out shares to settle a collective agreement.

Why is the Premier claiming that she's selling Hydro One to build transit and infrastructure when we can see that that's not what's happening?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Actually, Mr. Speaker, what you can see is the projects that are being built around this province right now. You can see that the Union-Pearson line is going to open on June 6. You can see the digging that's happening across Eglinton as the Crosstown gets built. You can see the buses running in Brampton—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and the member from Lanark. The member from Lanark, you're warned. The member from Renfrew has two. The member from Essex has two.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You can see the 407, Mr. Speaker, that's going into its second phase, that's going to go out to 35/115. I can tell you that when I was in Peterborough last week, the people in Peterborough were very, very happy about that road being built.

I would suggest that the leader of the third party has no plan in order to complete those projects.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** When I was in Kingston and the Islands, the people there had no idea that their MPP was running on the sell-off of Hydro One. That's what I can tell you.

This is not about transit, and it isn't about infrastructure.

The actions of this government make it clear that they don't need the 3% the sale of Hydro One would contribute to that 10-year, \$130-billion promise that they've made. She doesn't even have the money yet—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please continue.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** She doesn't even have the money yet, Speaker, and the Premier is already spending it on things other than transit and infrastructure.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Economic Development is warned.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Selling Hydro One will mean higher bills for families and businesses. It doesn't improve reliability. It's going to cost the province billions in lost revenues.

Families don't like this plan. Even Liberal Party activists oppose this plan.

The Premier is showing by her actions that this isn't about transit and infrastructure. Will she pull the plug before it's too late?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Before I move to the Premier, just in case he didn't hear it, the Minister of Economic Development is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, let's just be clear. The leader of the third party, when she talks about pulling the plug, is saying, "Pull the plug on building infrastructure around this province." That's what she's saying.

The fact is that she ran on the plan that we ran on. She ran on a plan to review assets in order to have the money to reinvest in the assets that we need for the 21st century.

It would be the easiest thing in the world for a party in opposition to just say, "Don't do that. Just stop. Don't do anything." That's not what government does. The responsibility of government is to move this province forward, to make the tough decisions that are not always popular. I get that.

If we don't build infrastructure now, if we don't work with Hamilton and build that LRT, make sure that we get

that infrastructure in place, then the boom that's happening in Hamilton can't continue. I'm not going to stand by and let that happen. We're going to make those investments.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We'll put a stop to that quickly, too.

New question.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. After six months of flip-flopping on SAMS, your mismanagement continues to negatively impact the lives of 900,000 vulnerable Ontarians. The SAMS implementation, which you and your Premier assured everybody was "pretty seamless" and a "small glitch," and which you likened to rebooting your BlackBerry, also continues to snowball into a costlier mess by the day.

1100

From Windsor, London, Hamilton and Waterloo to Ottawa, municipalities everywhere are racking up millions of dollars in extra costs because you failed to successfully implement SAMS, but we have yet to hear you commit to fully reimbursing municipalities for the day-to-day operating fiascos of your new social assistance program. Minister, will you issue reimbursements to municipalities—yes or no?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to discuss the PricewaterhouseCoopers report that we received late last week and its 19 recommendations, which our ministry will be adopting. In fact, I'm meeting with PwC later today.

Certainly in that report they made it quite clear that, in fact, SAMS is functioning in a way that we have been able to produce some four million payments to vulnerable Ontarians over the last five months. It is functioning in a way that is a basis for our reform of social assistance going forward.

Of course, we did have some completely obsolete technology previously: the SDMT system, which was reviewed by the Auditor General many, many times. I think the House might be interested to hear that, in fact, the Conservative government introduced that computer system in 2001, at a cost of \$400 million.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Back to the minister: Sadly, Minister, recommendations don't put food on the table or pay the exorbitant hydro bills of our most vulnerable. Let me remind you: a pretty seamless rollout, a small glitch, an all-inclusive \$240-million cost. With all due respect, the key facts you told us and the Ontario public to date about the SAMS implementation have been untrue.

So far, you've dumped an additional—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Withdraw.

So far, you've dumped an additional \$30 million into the system to cover up your failures. Minister, Ontario families can't afford to keep bailing you and your Liberal government out for your mistakes. Will you set the record straight here and now? What is the total cost of this failed effort going to cost the taxpayer, where is the money going to come from and what cuts will have to take place to make up for it?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I'm sure the member does know that we've reimbursed municipalities to the tune of some \$15 million to date.

In terms of the way forward, which is what this is all about, we have been given a very clear road map by PwC. We will be taking their recommendations very seriously on the governance issue, the structure of the project through the transition as we move towards business as usual.

We're putting together a new communication plan for our front-line workers. I want to thank them again; I know they've had some difficulty in terms of the technology and some of the communication tools and training tools that we use, but we intend, going forward, to make the system far more user-friendly for them, and we're on the path towards that, as PwC has confirmed.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Speaker, this government is planning a fire sale of Hydro One. Six months after this budget is passed, Hydro One will be stripped of oversight from the Auditor General, the Integrity Commissioner and the Ombudsman. Ontarians will also be stripped of their right to request information from Hydro One under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

It's clear that this government wants to leave Ontarians in the dark. Will the Premier admit that she has no interest in being accountable and transparent to Ontarians?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite understands that a publicly created company has different mechanisms for oversight. He understands that. We've made it very clear that Hydro One will remain regulated. We've made it very clear that the way prices are set now by the Ontario Energy Board is the way prices will be set after this broadening of the ownership. He also knows that Hydro One will continue to be regulated by the Ontario Business Corporations Act and the Ontario Securities Act, so he knows all that.

But the fact is that this party that is supposed to support the environment, is supposed to support public transportation, is basically saying, "Don't build infrastructure." They're saying, "Don't make the decisions that are necessary to be able to build transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area." They're saying, "Stop all that," which I think would be a big mistake for this province.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's clear to Ontarians that this Liberal government has embarked on a campaign to undermine and discredit the officers of the House. We've heard this story before and we know how it ends. It's bad enough that she's selling our public assets without any mandate to do so.

Speaker, why is this government more interested in covering its tracks than in ensuring accountability and oversight?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, again I would say to the third party, why are they not interested in building new tracks? Why are they not interested in investing in the infrastructure that they know full well is needed by their constituents and the businesses that reside in their ridings? Why are they not interested in making the investments that will bring business to this province, will update our infrastructure, will modernize our infrastructure and will invest in the assets that are needed for the 21st century? Why are they not interested in doing that, especially when they ran on the same plan, our same fiscal framework that said we were going to review the assets of this province and make sure that we were investing in the new assets that are needed for the 21st century? That's the question I think we have to pose to them.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Many of my constituents in Sudbury have expressed significant concerns about the news that the OPP has decided to move its search and rescue helicopter in Sudbury to Orillia. They're concerned about what this means for safety for our community and that of communities across northern Ontario. Front-line police officers, search and rescue officers, doctors and nurses, city officials, along with average citizens, are all saying the same thing: that the OPP's decision to move this helicopter to Orillia will have significant impacts on the health and safety of northerners.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister provide to this House more information as to how the OPP reached this decision?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member from Sudbury for advocating for the safety and security of his community.

Speaker, I'm glad to have the opportunity to stand in the Legislature and discuss this very important issue. The safety and security of every Ontarian is the number one priority of the ministry and the government. It's also the most important consideration for the Ontario Provincial Police.

Given the questions being raised about this locally, I have sought more information about how Sudbury and the north are served by aircraft in search and rescue operations. The OPP are mandated to provide certain police services across the province, including aviation support.

The OPP have the responsibility to communicate their decisions effectively so that all communities in Ontario get the information they need to feel and be safe. Therefore, we encourage the OPP to continue to communicate with the people of Sudbury so that they and all northerners can be assured that public safety and aviation support in the north is maintained.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Minister, while I realize the OPP make their own operational decisions, I and many constituents still have significant concerns about what this means for public safety. For example, we have an aging population in northern Ontario, and if one of our seniors goes missing, time is of the essence. Adding an additional hour of flight time to get to Sudbury, let alone any other northern community, is very concerning.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that this is an OPP decision, so can the minister outline what this government is going to do in order to protect the safety of the public in Sudbury and right across northern Ontario?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I thank the member from Sudbury. I have full confidence in the OPP to make the necessary decisions to keep all Ontarians safe. As I previously mentioned, I've requested more information from my Deputy Minister of Community Safety about this decision to better understand how it will continue to best serve the people of northern Ontario. My most important priority is ensuring the safety and security of every Ontarian.

I know the OPP, using their own aircraft, work with other ministries, local police forces and the military to support search and rescue operations across Ontario. For example, the OPP has a 40-year history of working closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, which offers planes and helicopters, primarily in the north, including Dryden, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Muskoka. This practice has been used effectively in the northwest and throughout northern parts of the province.

Speaker, the OPP, like all police services in Ontario, have a responsibility to make decisions in the best—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

1110

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, despite growing public opposition to your plan to sell Hydro One, you seem unwilling to change your tactics and provide Ontarians with information.

As in the past, Liberals say one thing and do another. In 2002, then-Liberal energy critic Sean Conway said that the provincial government "has no mandate to sell off the grid.... It is unbelievable that it is being sold without any discussion or debate." But now that you have a majority government, you seem perfectly fine to do just that.

Premier, will you open up the backrooms, put any deal for Hydro One in front of the Auditor General and the

Financial Accountability Officer and subject it to a value-for-money audit so Ontarians can see whether or not they're getting a fair deal?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As the member opposite knows, the whole reason that we undertook a review of our assets was to invest in infrastructure. The fact is that the party opposite doesn't support that, so it's understandable that they are going to work to undermine any investments in infrastructure that we would make.

However, I think the member opposite knows full well that, for example, reinstating the Connecting Links program, which will help rural and small towns across this province to maintain roads that they have not been able to maintain, that they have not been able to upgrade—I think that member knows that investment is important. I think the member knows that the four-laning of Highway 11/17 across the north is a very important thing to do. We're not going to be able to do that unless we have the resources to do it.

I think the member opposite also knows that investing in infrastructure and transit in our urban centres so that our economy can grow is also important, and that's the investment we're going to make.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Premier, the reason that so many Ontarians are opposed to your plan to sell off Hydro One is because of answers like that. Ratepayers deserve openness, transparency and accountability, because if you mess up this sale, they will be the ones who pay for it through higher hydro bills.

Over a decade ago, Dalton McGuinty said this: "The Tories don't have a mandate to go ahead with the sale.... These people have never had their say on this, not in an election, not even in public hearings."

Premier, is this not just another case of Liberal "do as I say, not as I do" behaviour, and won't the ratepayers of Ontario be the ones to suffer for your crass political hypocrisy?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I want it on record. Will the member withdraw, please.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The answer to the question is no, Mr. Speaker, because one of the starting points that we had for this discussion of assets was, let's look at how the 407 was dealt with. Let's look at how the party opposite made a decision, when they were in government, to sell a public asset completely, to not continue to regulate that asset, to get rid of all of the revenue to make sure there was no future benefit to the people of the province.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton, second time.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We looked at that as a model, and we said that we're going to do the opposite. We're going to make sure we retain ownership, we're

going to make sure that there is a future benefit to the people of the province and we're going to ensure that we have an efficient, well-run company that will continue to return a dividend to the people of the province—all things that the party opposite did not do.

## GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is to the Premier. Using public dollars for partisan advertising is wrong. It's wrong when it's Stephen Harper; it's wrong when it's the Liberal Premier of Ontario. In fact, even the Liberal leader in Ottawa seems to think it's wrong to run partisan ads on the public dime. But the Liberal leader at Queen's Park is gutting the rules so she can run partisan ads on the public dime. Can the Premier explain why she's taking a page from Stephen Harper so she can run partisan ads on public dollars in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, let me say to the member opposite, just consider that we're the first and the only jurisdiction in Canada that has such legislation, and we will continue to have legislation that will ban partisan advertising. That legislation will stay in place. In fact, we're broadening that; we're proposing that we broaden that legislation to make sure that in the digital realm, the same rules apply.

The fact is that we agree that we should strengthen this legislation. We also agree that it would be an important part of this legislation, this initiative, to look at third-party advertising and see if there are some limits that we need to put on third-party advertising. I suggest that those are things that the third party might want to support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Selling Hydro One is the wrong decision. People don't like it, and it's going to be the people of Ontario who are paying the price for that decision.

The auditor says that by gutting the rules about partisan advertising, "The government could flood the province with self-congratulatory and self-promotional advertising...." It's clear that the people oppose the sell-off of Hydro One. Even Liberal activists oppose the sell-off. The plan is good for consultants and it's good for bankers, but it's bad for families and businesses in this province. Is the Premier gutting the rules about partisan advertising so that she can run ads to try and sell the sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Typically, the third party is using language that really doesn't apply to what we're doing. We're changing the legislation; we are proposing changes to the legislation. Let's talk about the changes that we're proposing.

We're proposing that we give the Auditor General oversight of digital advertising, as well as transit and movie theatre ads. The Auditor General has called for this; we're proposing that we do that.

The legislation would also be amended to provide a clear definition of partisan advertising, require the government to submit a preliminary version of the ad to the



AG for review and reinforce rules around government advertising during general elections.

Yes, we are proposing changes, but the legislation banning partisan advertising would remain in place and would, in fact, be strengthened and clarified.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS STRATEGY

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

The minister announced in November 2014 that there was an important expansion of our mental health strategy that will help us improve access to services, reduce wait times and close the gaps in our system.

The residents of my riding of Ottawa–Orléans have been asking me about the new Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council and its plan to advise government on how to provide better access, better quality and better value. I informed my constituents that the council is chaired by Susan Pigott, and the members of the council represent diverse sectors that work on mental health and addictions issues. I know that the council will provide expert advice on the strategy's investments, promote collaboration across sectors and report annually on the strategy's progress.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, what are the priorities of this council?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you to the member. We actually have two council members in our gallery today: Camille Quenneville and Arthur Gallant. They'll be joining me after question period on the steps of the Legislature for the launch of the mental health bus. It's a mobile program for youth across this province. I invite all members of this House to join us for a group photo in support of Mental Health Week. The council members will be providing important advice as we move forward with phase 2 of our mental health strategy.

The priorities of that strategy include expanding programs in schools and the workplace; ensuring early identification and intervention for those with mental illness and addictions; expanding housing, employment supports and initiatives to reduce contact with the criminal justice system; improving that transition from child to youth mental health services; and establishing a new funding model that will be linked to population need, quality improvement and service integration.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Thank you, Minister, for that response. I will make sure to let my constituents know about the priorities of the mental health council as they work in collaboration with sector partners to accomplish the full goals set forward in phase 2 of the mental health strategy. I know my constituents and Ontarians want access to mental health care outside of a clinical hospital setting. They want services that are in the community and closer to home.

I was at a bowl-a-thon fundraiser yesterday for James Osborne, who committed suicide at 18. The third annual

James Strikes Back bowl-a-thon for youth mental health funds initiatives and services for those youth who are facing challenges. I had the great pleasure at this event to share that our government will be investing \$138 million over the next three years to expand and support needed community health services, but I know that, to deliver on our bold plan, more work needs to be done.

Can the minister tell this House how his mental health leadership advisory council plans to deliver on these initiatives?

1120

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** This \$138 million of new funding is an important investment. It's the role of the mental health advisory council to guide our implementation, ensuring that we're using those dollars most effectively and efficiently.

The council has established five different working groups. They include the promotion, prevention and early intervention working group, to provide expert advice on promoting mental health well-being, prevention of mental illness or addiction and early intervention for Ontarians who are experiencing mental illness. We have a youth addictions working group, as well, providing advice on delivering services and supports to youth with addictions. We have a community mental health and addictions funding reform working group that will provide us with advice as we look to implement a new funding formula, a strategic alignment and capacity working group providing advice on a range of system-level issues, and a supportive housing working group that will provide us with advice as we develop our strategy to create a thousand new supportive housing units as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is for the Premier. Even the Toronto Star agrees with the Ontario PC caucus that your scheme to give away Hydro One stocks to power workers—including those who work at OPG, an entirely different corporate entity altogether—is, as they say, “puzzling.”

Not only have details been scarce, but the optics are horrible: a fire sale of a public asset; a promise to fund more infrastructure when new money isn't even included in the budget, not to mention your LRT musings today; a rich pension plan that gives employees a 4-to-1 benefit of taxpayer dollars to personal investment; and this government's delusions of what net-zero budgeting really means.

I think it's time that the Premier came clean with Ontario families on what this fire sale of Hydro One for infrastructure really is. Will she admit today it's just a ruse in order for her to pay off public sector pensions?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that the member opposite has wound into that question.

We're very pleased that there's a tentative net-zero agreement that has been reached between the Power



Workers' Union and employers. That agreement has not been ratified yet, so we're not going to talk about the specifics. We're going to be respectful to the process of ratification.

I'm pleased that the leadership of the power workers expressed support for the Hydro One proposal, because they understand that this can be a strong company. I think they also understand that the need to invest in infrastructure is critical to the health of the province. So we have made that commitment. We are going to continue along that road, Mr. Speaker, because we know those investments are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Back to the Premier: This is ridiculous. You've spent that money from the Hydro One sale, which hasn't even occurred, at least three times.

If the government believes they can pay off their debt, build infrastructure—including a new Hamilton LRT, as you said in question period today—and provide valuable stock options to the Power Workers' Union, you have not been forthcoming with the details. It makes the rest of us wonder what you're hiding. It's precisely the back-of-the-napkin planning that got this government into trouble with the \$1-billion Oakville and Mississauga power plants. This is getting out of hand.

The Premier assigned the Treasury Board president to scale back spending, maximize assets and bring sanity back to public sector wages and pensions, yet it's this type of sleight of hand that continues to build up our debt and our deficit and erode our infrastructure in the province.

My colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke asked you earlier: Will you put this before the Auditor General, and will you put this sale of assets before the Parliamentary Budget Officer, so that the people of this province will know what you're wasting their—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Stop the clock. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We're doing much more than that in terms of making this accessible, accountable and transparent to the people of Ontario. We brought it forward in the 2014 budget, we brought it forward in the economic statement, we brought it forward in our platform, and we did it again in 2015. We even had a lock-up specifically around this issue, and we're going to continue moving forward.

This deal that the opposition is making reference to is a net-zero deal with the Power Workers' Union, and we're going to be respectful of its ratification process so that we get the details understood by their membership.

Let me quote Don MacKinnon, the president of the Power Workers' Union, who said this: "The Power Workers' Union welcomes and supports the decision by government to keep Hydro One whole in an IPO process that would, in partnership with government, broaden the

ownership structure in Hydro One. This will position the company to grow and provide further high-skill quality jobs for Ontarians."

The idea is to grow the company, increase our dividends and support the workers.

## TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la première ministre.

Early this morning, we learned that secondary teachers in Peel have joined their colleagues at the Rainbow board in my riding, as well as educators in Durham, and are now on strike. Speaker, 42,000 students are unable to attend classes in Peel. A total of 67,000 students are out across the province. Meanwhile, the Premier and her government refuse to take responsibility for this Mike Harris 2.0 labour unrest. Considering that negotiations at the central table have also broken down, we know that these are not simply local issues.

Will the Premier finally admit that her austerity agenda is forcing students and families to pay the price?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** In fact, what I would like to report to people is that people were working very hard over the weekend. I know that when they finished up last night, it was well after midnight. So what I would say is that all three parties—the school boards, the unions and the government—are continuing to work.

Yes, people stepped away from the table at some time after midnight last night. But we continue to be determined to go back and to get that negotiated agreement, because we know that the only way we're going to end all of the strikes and get all of our students back to the table is in fact to negotiate and to reach an agreement that all three parties—the unions, the boards and the government—can agree on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Back to the Premier: The Premier claims to have cut her teeth in education. However, she's refusing to take responsibility for the fact that secondary students could soon lose their school year. To make matters worse, Ontario's 76,000 public elementary teachers will be in a legal strike position on May 10, and English Catholic teachers recently voted, by more than 94%, in favour of a strike.

Speaker, why are students and families being forced to pay the price for Liberal flip-flopping on class sizes and mismanagement of our education sector?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think it's important to note that we actually have been working with our colleges and universities; we've been working with our school boards. We know that students are concerned. In fact, I spent some time on the phone this morning with representatives of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association, talking about the situation with them.

What we do know is that in every board in the province, including Durham, Rainbow and Peel, all the interim marks have been submitted to the colleges and

universities, and the college and university admission process is unfolding as it would normally.

We've been working with the boards in all three of the areas where there are strikes to make sure that there are online materials. We've been working very closely with them. One of the beauties of modern—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

### CANCER PREVENTION

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Last Thursday, the Canadian Cancer Society held its MPP Education Day at Queen's Park. I was proud that day, as were all members, to wear the daffodil pin to show our support for Canadians living with cancer and to help raise awareness of cancer-related issues.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer has concluded that excessive tanning bed use increases the risk of the deadliest form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, and that risk is 75% higher if tanning bed use begins before the age of 35.

Now that we are heading into the intense sun season—and in Beaches–East York, we have many beaches to enjoy the sun—I wish to remind the House that just last Friday was the first-year anniversary of our tanning bed legislation coming into force. This is a good time to remind everyone of the risks associated with excessive use of tanning beds.

Speaker, will the minister remind the House of the details of this important piece of legislation?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Beaches–East York for this very important question.

1130

Speaker, cancer in any form can take a terrible toll on individuals and families, and I dare say that every single one of us in this House has or can relate to a story of cancer.

The Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil pin is a symbol of strength and courage in the fight against cancer. I was proud to wear the pin and meet with volunteers and representatives of the society on Thursday.

The dangers associated with exposure to artificial ultraviolet radiation at a young age have been well documented. The WHO has classified tanning beds in its highest-risk category, along with tobacco. The WHO reports that the risk of skin cancer increases by 75% when tanning beds are used prior to the age of 35.

That is why our government took strong action to protect Ontario teens from the dangers associated with tanning bed use. I'm proud that our government passed legislation to restrict—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you to the minister for the excellent work she's doing to protect the youth of On-

tario. I, too, am very proud that our government has taken strong action on this file.

In her answer to my first question, the minister referenced the World Health Organization's classification of tanning beds as one of the highest cancer risk categories, along with tobacco. I know that the associate minister in charge of wellness is hard at work protecting our youth and promoting healthy lifestyles for our children.

I think we all agree that prevention is the strongest protection for our youth against the dangers of tobacco. Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease and premature death in Ontario, and kills upwards of 13,000 people a year.

Our government's Bill 45 seeks to further protect our youth from the dangers of smoking, and I know that the parents in my riding of Beaches–East York are hoping that Bill 45 will quickly pass.

Speaker, through you, will the minister please update the House on the status of Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Thanks again to the member for Beaches–East York, who does such a wonderful job representing his constituents.

Speaker, we know that flavoured tobacco products have proved to be a gateway to tobacco use and addiction for our youth. We know that one in four high school students who report smoking have smoked menthol cigarettes in the last 30 days. We also know that electronic cigarettes are new products and that we will not know the full health impact of this new technology for some time. That is why we have proposed Bill 45, which, if passed, will ban the sale of all flavoured tobacco, including menthol, and regulate electronic cigarettes.

Bill 45 is now back in the House, and I look forward to its speedy passage, because after that begins the real work of writing regulations. That's where the rubber hits the road. We want to ensure that we listen to our stakeholders and write our regulations in a way that makes sense and is fair to all.

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question today is for the Minister of Education. Durham school board has 24,000 students not in school today, now their 11th day. Rainbow school board has 5,000 students not in school today, and that's their sixth day. And now 42,000 students at the Peel board are not in school today—in fact, we have about seven young people from the Peel school board who are with us today to watch your answer. That's almost 72,000 students not in our schools today.

Your Bill 122, the two-tiered collective bargaining act, is failing students and their families.

Minister, what steps are you taking to assure parents and students that their school year is not in jeopardy? Please answer for these young people who are in the audience here today.



**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As I said in my previous answer, I'm obviously disappointed that we didn't conclude an agreement yesterday.

I do want people to know that the negotiators at the central table, the school board associations, the government, the unions, were working all weekend till sometime this morning, trying to reach a resolution. In terms of the local talks, I know that both the board and the union in Peel were there all weekend trying to reach agreements.

We all understand, locally at Peel and at Rainbow and Durham, that the thing we need to do, both centrally and locally, is to reach collective agreements, because it is only through reaching agreement that we can get all the strikes to end and get the young people back in class. We want them back in class.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I don't think these young people were very impressed with that answer, okay, because I'm certainly not.

Minister, you have huge problems with Bill 122 and you have to contend with them. It is very clear that following a dozen years of Liberal mismanagement, your Bill 122's two-tiered collective bargaining is failing students and their families.

Next Monday, there's a strong possibility that 817,000 elementary students will be impacted in a very, very negative way. You've been quoted: "I am not waiting until September. As long as I am in this seat, I will try and expedite it as" quickly "as possible."

Minister, exactly what are you doing to ensure that school proms, class trips and, above all, graduations are not impacted by your current Liberal mismanagement?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As I just said, we know that the college and university application process is ongoing. My ministry officials are in constant touch with all of the boards that have been affected by strikes or that may be affected by strikes. We are in constant contact with the colleges and universities. I am confident that young people will be graduating this spring.

But I do have to point out that the way that they were going to handle this was actually to get rid of 22,700 teachers and education workers. I would suggest to you that firing people and laying them off and cutting them is not the way to get labour peace.

#### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** My question is for the Premier. After years of warning, last week it was announced that GM's Camaro line in Oshawa would be shipped to the US, and with it, 1,000 jobs in the plant and nearly 10 times that in supply-chain industries in our community.

Today we see reports that the province plans to appoint an auto industry adviser, but that's after \$1.1 billion invested and a week too late. I know you shouldn't put the cart before the horse, but this government just let the cart get shipped out of town.

Will the Premier please explain to the 1,000 workers about to lose their jobs and to the 10,000 others whose livelihoods depend on them why she waited until the week after the announcement to make this appointment when she has known it was coming for years?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** This decision was made two and a half years ago. We were disappointed then; we remain disappointed today. Our thoughts are always with the workers who are impacted, and that's why we're relentlessly working with GM, Unifor and the federal government to ensure that there is a mandate that's landed in Oshawa after 2016.

I can tell you what the member opposite can do: She's the member for Oshawa. Her leader wants to bring in a party that would jack up corporate tax rates. She says she's going to jack up corporate tax rates to pay off the deficit. That would be a 12% increase. That would kill any opportunity for us to get investment anywhere in this province.

Talk your leader down from her irresponsible position to jack up corporate tax rates. Work with us to ensure we have a competitive environment to land this investment in Oshawa. It's our single, number one priority as a government—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The time for question period is over.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: In one of my answers, I referenced the Hamilton LRT when I was talking about projects. I conflated two lines that are in the budget. I should have said either the Huron-Main LRT or Hamilton rapid transit. I just wanted to correct my record.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The page captain's mother, Leona Corr, is here today. I'd just like to welcome her.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1139 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### UNITED WAY

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Speaker, last Thursday I was pleased to attend the United Way Perth-Huron's Spirit of Community celebration. This event celebrated our local volunteers who contribute so much to our communities. Thursday's event was also host to a very special announcement: The United Way Perth-Huron raised over

\$1.15 million during this year's campaign. It's the most they have ever raised in one campaign.

I would like to recognize the campaign co-chairs, police chief John Bates and Wayne Smith. They did outstanding work.

I would also like to offer a special thank you to the residents of Perth and Huron counties. Your outstanding generosity funds the United Way's important community initiatives. We're fortunate to be part of a community that supports local needs and is so willing to give back.

To Ryan Erb and the United Way team, thank you for everything you contribute our communities. Your leadership means a great deal to so many great causes.

### STEPS FOR LIFE WALK

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** This past weekend 15 communities across Ontario, including my own community of London, participated in the Steps for Life walk. The walk raises money for Threads of Life, a national organization that supports families grieving in the aftermath of workplace fatality, serious injury or occupational disease.

The London walk was opened by Dave and Barb Gerber, who spoke from the heart about the loss of their 25-year-old son, Kyle, who died after a workplace injury in 2008. The Gerbers' story—and the stories of thousands of injured workers that were shared on April 29 at the National Day of Mourning—is a powerful reminder to all MPPs about our obligation to do everything possible to make Ontario workplaces safe. We need to ensure proper training and oversight; we need to hold employers to account when they fail to protect workers; and we need to provide workers who are injured on the job with the support and respect they deserve from WSIB.

Speaker, as NDP critic for post-secondary education, I once again call on the government to address the lack of workplace protection for one particular group of young people; that is, post-secondary students who are doing a voluntary unpaid work placement as part of their program of study. These students currently fall through the cracks of the Employment Standards Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. If they are injured or killed during their work placement, they are not covered by WSIB. With Ontario's high rates of youth unemployment, unpaid voluntary work placements provide many post-secondary students with their only opportunity to gain work experience. We cannot fail these students.

### SENIORS' ISSUES

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Earlier today, I had the privilege of hosting a seniors' advisory group meeting in my riding of Etobicoke Centre. Once a month, I host seniors from my riding at the Eatonville library to discuss important issues impacting our community and residents of all ages. Over the course of this past year, we've welcomed knowledgeable guests from the community and beyond, and have covered a range of topics particularly relevant to seniors.

I'd like to thank those guests who come to speak at my seniors' advisory group meetings. In November, we had Bobbi Greenberg from the Mississauga Halton CCAC speaking. In January, we had Lisa Thompson from MTO talking about safe winter driving. In February, we had Denise Harris from the Etobicoke Historical Society talking about Etobicoke's history. In March, we had Michael Burgess from 22 Division talking about frauds and scams. In April, we had Graham Webb from the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly talking about elderly abuse. And today, we had Ted Rouse, a retired financial planner, talking about planning for seniors.

These meetings, Mr. Speaker, provide important information to the seniors who attend them and invaluable feedback to me as their representative here at Queen's Park and in our community. Today's meeting was our last before the summer. I want to thank everyone who has participated in the last few months and convey how deeply appreciative I am of their time and the feedback they've shared with me. Their insights have made an enormous difference in my first year and have made me a better MPP.

Of course, we will all have a chance to catch up again at my annual seniors' tea, which is taking place in June, during Seniors' Month. Ontario's theme this year for Seniors' Month is "Vibrant Seniors, Vibrant Communities." I can't think of a group that theme describes more accurately than the seniors that I meet every day in Etobicoke Centre. I'd like to thank all Etobicoke seniors for all you do to keep our community vibrant.

### ENERGY SECTOR

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I rise today to inform the House of a very important event taking place in Sarnia-Lambton. On May 5 and 6, the Sarnia-Lambton Research Park Bowman Centre will be hosting the Big Debate, a high-energy discussion of what to do with our nation's wealth of petroleum resources: refine it or sell it?

The program for this two-day event brings together compelling issues of a proposed refinery investment in Sarnia-Lambton, adding value to oil sands bitumen, national and provincial economic impacts, and the evolving manufacturing potentials based upon the energy sector.

The moderator will be Jeffrey Simpson of the Globe and Mail. Participants Dr. Jim Stanford, CAW, and Professor Andrew Leach of the University of Alberta, will debate the following resolution: "Be it resolved that provincial and federal governments in Canada should take proactive measures to encourage greater refining and processing of Canada's petroleum resources within Canada than would occur through private market decisions alone."

Mr. Speaker, Sarnia-Lambton has a long and storied history as the hub of energy procurement in the province of Ontario and the industrious Great Lakes region, and is a perfect setting for a detailed discussion of the importance of the oil industry to Ontario and Canada's future. I look forward to attending this very important event and



hope that this government will soon commit its support to the SABER petrochemical project in Sarnia–Lambton.

### MOOSE TAGS

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Often members' statements are used to talk about culture, and I'd like to talk about part of the culture of northern Ontario. One of the things that's very important to our culture is the moose hunt. People come together over generations, and it's one of the most pivotal parts of our culture.

Sadly, it's a part of our culture that might die, and not because of a lack of interest but because of the management of our moose harvest. As you know, it's done by a lottery for moose tags, and in some of our units, tags have dropped by 90%. No one is more concerned about the number of moose and the long-term health of the moose population than hunters. Hunters want to work with the MNR to ensure that the moose population is stable and growing.

But in the budget, I again see that there has been a cut of \$50 million to the Natural Resources Management Program. So they're going to focus on their core. Do you realize, Speaker, that in my area, there are 50 townships, and there are only two conservation officers? It's impossible for two conservation officers to manage 50 townships. Also, they're supposed to do aerial surveys every three years to be scientifically credible. The most hunting pressure in the province is in unit 29—they did it five years.

Again, I urge the government to actually work with northerners to ensure the future of the moose hunt.

### 2ND BATTALION, IRISH REGIMENT OF CANADA

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the 2nd Battalion, Irish Regiment of Canada, and to congratulate them on receiving the freedom of the city from the city of Greater Sudbury.

The freedom of the city is an ancient privilege. It's granted by a city for a specific military unit to march through the city with bayonets fixed, colours flying and drums beating. The Irish Regiment of Canada, based out of my riding of Sudbury, was granted freedom of the city on October 15, 2005. They will be holding their parade in Sudbury on Saturday May 9, in Tom Davies Square, with a reception and a dinner to follow.

The regiment formed on October 15, 1915, and its members have served in a number of campaigns including World War II, the former Yugoslavia and peace-keeping missions in the Middle East and Afghanistan. I think it's very important that I also acknowledge Warrant Officer Gaétan Roberge, who made the ultimate sacrifice and was killed in the line of duty in October 2008.

Since they moved to Sudbury in 1965, the 2nd Battalion, Irish Regiment of Canada has been an integral part of the community. They've been helpful in the food bank; they pick up all of the food for our food bank cam-

paign during Christmas. They participate in festivals. They're involved in many other aspects of our community that are so important.

There are 80 to 100 reservists based out of Sudbury, and many veterans of the Irish Regiment call Sudbury home. We'd like to congratulate them again on their 100th anniversary.

1310

### BOB HUSKINSON

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's with great sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to a long-time friend of mine, Bob Huskinson. Bob passed away last night, and I join everyone in mourning this outstanding gentleman, one of the city of Brockville's great citizens.

Bob was a former mayor and a former member of council. He was actually a giant on council. He was larger than life. His passion was unrivalled. His dedication to the citizens of Brockville spanned an incredible 26 years, the longest public service record that anyone had in the history of the great city of Brockville.

It was an honour for me to serve with Bob Huskinson for three terms—nine years. He was one of the first people, actually, whom I went to see as a 21-year-old who wanted to seek the office of mayor of Brockville.

I can remember going to his kitchen with his son, who was a long-time friend of mine. I was wearing my high school football jacket. He asked me if I owned a sports jacket or a suit. I said that I actually owned both. He told me that I should hang the football jacket up and make sure that I wore my suit or my sports jacket and was presentable when I knocked on doors. He gave me some incredible advice during that first campaign that I had as a young person.

Knowing Bob would be in his seat at a council meeting, ready to serve and ready to tackle the issues—he was one of the most well-prepared politicians that I ever met. Everyone I've ever served with on city council for those years, and even those after, said that he was always so prepared. He also did his homework.

He taught me the understanding of looking at both sides and trying to seek a compromise, but always making sure that I felt in my heart it was the right thing to do. Because if he didn't think it was the right thing to do, there was no way you were ever going to sway Bob Huskinson from the view he had.

I was proud to call him a friend. I was proud to spend many summers at his cottage on Charleston Lake as a young person with his family; proud to know his family and his extended family. I just want to take this opportunity to extend to his wife Janice and his sons Craig, Rick and Rob and their families and their extended families my deepest sympathies. Bob was a great man and we're going to miss him.

## CANADIAN MUSIC WEEK

**Mr. Mike Colle:** This week is the beginning of music week. More than 4,500 musicians and 160,000 music fans are coming to Toronto to participate in Canada's largest new music festival, with more than 900 performances taking place in 60 venues throughout Toronto.

The start of music week is called Music Monday. It's the world's largest single event dedicated to raising awareness for music education. Each year, hundreds of thousands of students and educators and music-makers participate in the simultaneous nationwide concert performance of an original song written by a Canadian artist.

This year's title song, *We Are One*, was written by 16-year-old Connor Ross, a student at Mayfield Secondary School in Dufferin-Caledon. Connor's song was the successful choice from 200 songs that were submitted across Canada.

Music Monday is a great example of how music programs shape young lives and the fun that young people can have in making music. I congratulate all the young Ontarians who have been taking part in this year's Music Monday and for being part of music week right across the province, including in Brantford and Eastview.

## STAR WARS DAY

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Today is a very important occasion. It's an unofficial holiday known as Star Wars Day. May 4 is celebrated by thousands of Star Wars fans around the globe. Although it is a nod to the classic sci-fi movies from the 1970s, there's actually a political connection to the first time that that reference was ever made.

It was on May 4, 1979, the day after Margaret Thatcher became Britain's first female Prime Minister, that her party decided to celebrate the victory by taking out a half-page advertisement in the London Evening News which said, "May the Fourth Be with You, Maggie. Congratulations."

Today, the Internet allows Star Wars fans around the globe to connect with each other, as May 4 has become a great grassroots tradition. In 2011, the very first organized celebration of Star Wars Day took place right here in Toronto at the Toronto Underground Cinema. This Friday, in my community of Kitchener-Waterloo at the Centre in the Square, John Morris Russell will conduct the K-W symphony orchestra in a program titled *The Final Frontier: From Star Wars to Star Trek and Beyond*. I'm told that the concert is going to be out of this world.

So whether you spend the day anticipating the newest Star Wars movie that's going to be out later this year or channelling positive forces to combat evil in the world, however you choose to celebrate, may the force be with you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON JUSTICE POLICY

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA JUSTICE

**M. Shafiq Qadri:** Monsieur le Président, je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la justice et je propose son adoption.

I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / *Projet de loi 49, Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS  
ELECTION ADVERTISING  
TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE  
DE LA PUBLICITÉ ÉLECTORALE  
DES GROUPES D'INTÉRÊT PARTICULIER

Mr. Walker moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 96, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act with respect to third party election advertising / *Projet de loi 96, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le financement des élections à l'égard de la publicité électorale de tiers.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** The bill amends the Election Finances Act to expand the definition of third-party election advertising to include issue advertising, which is defined as advertising with the purpose of taking a position on any issue within the legislative competence of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The bill imposes the following limits on third-party election advertising expenses: \$150,000 in relation to a general election and \$3,000 in relation to a given electoral district in a general election or by-election. The penalty for the offence is a fine equal to five times the full amount of the expenses



incurred, not just the amount in excess of the applicable limit, and if a third party is convicted of an offence of exceeding the limits applicable to an election period, the registration of the third party with the Chief Electoral Officer ceases to be valid and the third party is prohibited from applying for registration until after the polling day for the general election next, following the end of that election period.

At present, section 38 of the act limits the campaign expenses that a registered political party, a registered candidate, a constituency association endorsing the candidate, or a person or body acting on their behalf is allowed to incur during a campaign period and section 42 requires each political party to file a financial statement of those expenses with the Chief Electoral Officer. The bill expands those expenses to cover expenses that a person or body acting with the express or implied knowledge and consent of the party, candidate or constituency association incurs during a campaign period in relation to producing an election advertisement in support of the party or acquiring the means of transmitting such an election advertisement to the public.

## PETITIONS

### ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

**1320**

"Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

"Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

"Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

"Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research."

I fully support it, and will give it to page Misha to bring to the Clerks' table.

### SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to introduce a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre annually helps about 2,500 children with physical, neurological and developmental challenges;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is an exceptional program administered by expert faculty and staff that offers youth and their families a transformative experience that they would not receive in a less specialized setting;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program faces a shortfall in provincial funding;

"Whereas families raising children with special needs incur increased costs for care which the income test does not properly reflect;

"Whereas compliance with the provincial requirements means that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is unable to be sustained;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program closure will mean a loss of a valued skill set of expertise from teachers and support staff in our community that will leave some of the area's most vulnerable children and families without proper child care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To make up any funding shortfalls that result from transitioning to a fee subsidy model so that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program can remain operational and consider changes to the income test to better reflect the increased costs families raising children with special needs incur."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name and send it to the Clerks' table through page Jae Min.

### USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

"Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly has concluded its mobile device pilot project, which is now being consid-

ered by the Board of Internal Economy, chaired by the Speaker;

"Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for years;

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly has for years maintained a BlackBerry-only policy in a valiant effort to buy Canadian, but this approach is handicapping, retarding and penalizing MPPs, their staff and indeed all members of the legislative community;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, be platform-independent, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices of varying sizes, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario."

I certainly support this and send it to you via page Ashton.

#### WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition in support of improved winter roads maintenance. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the area maintenance contract system has failed Ontario drivers the past two winters;

"Whereas unsafe conditions led to the maintenance contractor being fined in the winter of 2013-14, as well as leading to a special investigation by the provincial Auditor General;

"Whereas the managed outsourcing system for winter roads maintenance, where the private contractor is responsible for maintenance, but MTO patrols the region and directs the contractor on the deployment of vehicles, sand and salt, has a proven track record for removing snow and ensuring that Ontario's highways are safe for travellers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario Ministry of Transportation take immediate action to improve the maintenance of winter roads based on the positive benefits of the previous delivery model, where MTO plays more of a role in directing the private contractor."

I support this and give it to Madison.

#### ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Speaker, I have a petition sent to me by Dianne Lacarte from Englehart.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas northern Ontario communities are connected across long distances by bus service; and

"Whereas the ONTC bus service is the only form of public transportation available to many northern Ontario residents; and

"Whereas reduction of customer service and the closure of stations will cause deterioration of the overall system of public transportation of passengers and goods in northeastern Ontario; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario committed to providing enhanced bus service to alleviate the loss of the ONTC passenger rail service;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Ontario Northland Transportation Commission bus service must be enhanced to ensure reliable and continuous accessibility including uniform provision of adequate public transportation for all communities and people of northern Ontario."

I wholeheartedly agree. I affix my signature and give it to page Colton.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It's entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water," and it reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition and to send it down with page Thomas.



## TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn’t necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

“Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

“Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses.”

I fully support it and will send it with the great page from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Cailyn Perry.

## ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

“Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

“Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

1330

“Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

“Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer’s disease

and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research.”

I affix my name to this petition, fully support it and will give it to page Madison to take to the table.

## USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

“Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly has concluded its mobile device pilot project, which is now being considered by the Board of Internal Economy, chaired by the Speaker;

“Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for years;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly has for years maintained a BlackBerry-only policy in a valiant effort to buy Canadian, but this approach is handicapping, retarding and penalizing MPPs, their staff and indeed all members of the legislative community;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, be platform-independent, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices of varying sizes, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario.

“In agreement whereof, we affix our signatures”—mine included, and send it to you, once again via page Ashton.

## OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

"Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

I fully support this, Mr. Speaker, will affix my name and send it with page Thomas.

#### USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

"Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

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"We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, be platform-independent, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices of varying sizes, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario."

I, too, agree, sign it and send it to you by page Jae Min.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

##### LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 30, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** When we last debated this particular bill at second reading, I understand that the member for Nipissing had the floor. I recognize the member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I encourage you to settle in and get yourself a glass of water. It's going to be a wonderful hour when you get to hear all the pearls. I'll keep you awake. I promise I'll keep you awake.

I am going to speak very frankly about the budget document and some of the contents in it, and I'll get my shameless plug in very early: I am going to be speaking—in fact, I'm going to read to the Liberals—chapters of Focus on Finance 2: A Look Into Ontario's Finances. If you want to read along, you can go to my legislative website, fedeli.com, and download a copy of the 106-page book. It is a shameless plug, but it's "must" reading for young and old. The web address is fedeli.com, in case you missed it.

Minister, did you enjoy it? Is it top financial advice to you?

Last week's budget, when presented—we could have seen the right thing done by the Liberals. They could have changed the path that Ontario is on. Over the last several weeks, our caucus certainly has stood here, sharing stories about the pain that's being inflicted by the Liberal government on families throughout Ontario. We also heard from the rating agencies, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, but we especially heard from the Auditor General. They all warned us about the same thing: Our economy, and this government, is headed in the wrong direction. Actually, it started back with Don Drummond, who said, when he rang the bell very clearly, that you're going the wrong way; you need to drastically change the direction we're headed. The Auditor General told us that if you don't change the direction, you're going to start seeing the very services we enjoy in Ontario being, in her words, crowded out. That means there's no room left for them because we're busy paying interest.

What does this government do instead, Speaker? More of the same: more spending, even more debt and yet another deficit. We are certainly one of the very few sub-nationals left in the world, especially one with an annual



deficit of this size. This is a massive deficit. Speaker, this government continues to use the province's credit card instead of using their debit card.

The budget, if you look carefully at it as we did, merely announces more of the same. In many instances it's a direct re-announcement—a cut-and-paste, if you will—from what we saw last year. A great example of that is the \$130-billion announcement on infrastructure. If you look in the 2014 budget, it was already there, word for word. In fact, in the discussion of the \$130-billion infrastructure budget, they took exactly the same words, plunked them in there and pretended it was some kind of new announcement. They're out there trumpeting this great news, which is old news.

1340

The only thing that really makes you wonder what the game is that's afoot is: In last year's budget, if you look carefully, Speaker—I'll even tell you the page. Page 45 of the 2015 budget talks about last year's budget, the 2014 budget. Asset optimization: That's the nice way of saying, "We're going to have a fire sale of our assets." If you look very carefully, last year they needed to sell, over four years, a total of \$3.1 billion in assets to make it work. That's \$1.1 billion this year, \$1 billion the next, only half a billion the further year, and half a billion the year after that. So their dedicated funds were \$3.1 billion. But now, all of a sudden, in addition to the sale of GM shares, the sale of the LCBO headquarters and the sale of the OPG building, they need a \$9-billion sale of hydro to make it work. In last year's budget, they only needed \$3.1 billion, but now, in addition to that, they need the \$9-billion fire sale of Hydro One.

They're selling public assets to pay for what was already budgeted. This is a shell game, Speaker. They're really using the money from the sale of Hydro One to pay off their mortgage. That's exactly what they're doing. It's a shell game. It's a little bit of a switcheroo.

In the budget last year—this \$130 billion that was announced—they needed \$3.1 billion. Now that we have this new money coming in, they'll take the money, put it into transit, but then take the money that already was in transit and haul that away. That's exactly what's about to happen here because they don't know how to balance their deficit; they don't know how to balance a budget. This money will be the money that will be used to get them down to the \$8.5 billion. I almost want to choke over that amount. It's still \$8.5 billion. They'll crow over how great that is—\$8.5 billion; they still plan on spending more than they plan on taking in.

Without that hydro revenue, Speaker—they're going to take 100% of our hydro, hive off 60%, sell it for \$9 billion, and then change the law that says you must use the revenue from the sale of hydro assets, and put it against the \$27-billion mortgage that is held on hydro. Instead of doing that, they're going to change the law. It's in the bill already to change the law—that does not force them to follow the law and put the money where it's destined. They're going to use it to bail out their own deficit.

So, Speaker, they're going to take the \$9 billion, put \$5 billion against the mortgage, and \$4 billion they're going to use ostensibly for transit—but in reality, take the transit money that was already there and back it out and put it towards the fact that they don't know how to balance a budget if their life depended on it.

What's going to happen now is, you've got \$9 billion out of the system and you've got only 40% of that asset left to generate the revenue to pay off the mortgage, so they won't have the revenue—right now, 100% of that revenue is available to pay off the mortgage. They're not going to have that any longer. So how are we going to pay the hydro mortgage? Well, we know darn well they're going to put their hands deeper and deeper into our ratepayers' pockets and try to dig out even more cash to pay off the bill because they took that money and put it elsewhere. That's exactly what's going to happen.

On Friday of last week, at 11 o'clock on Friday morning, May 1, the peak hydro rate went up exactly 15%. It went from 14 cents to 16.1 cents. I know they're not good at math; I understand that. We've seen that in the budget. It went up 15%, a number they continue to deny. But it's a fact: 14 cents to 16.1 cents; a 15% increase in hydro rates.

On November 1, hydro rates will go up again, according to them, only another 10%. On January 1, when they take the consumer benefit away, hydro rates will go up yet again, another 10%. So 15%, 10%, 10%—all within eight months. That's the reality of the hydro realm that these people have created. I don't know why they continue to use our hydro to cover up the mistakes that they've made.

Our team was very busy stripping away the numbers and getting to the real numbers. While we were doing that, they were busy stripping away all the transparency that is currently in the hydro sector.

Speaker, let me tell you a story about what is happening with Hydro One. The moment a single share is sold, Hydro One will no longer be deemed a public asset. That's in their bill. That's what's happening. What does that mean to the people of Ontario? Well, first of all, it strips the Auditor General of powers: no more value-for-money audits from the Auditor General. "Let's not have that pesky Auditor General involved in Hydro One any longer." They've seen to that. It's in the bill. They removed the right of the Auditor General to look into Hydro One's books. That's gone, day one. They cut out the Financial Accountability Officer after six months. They can no longer begin new audits. It's over: no more financial accountability of Hydro One. That's in their bill. The Financial Administration Act is amended to limit our ability to obtain any information on Hydro One—gone. We're stripped of that as well.

What's happening here is a wholesale stripping of any access to any information whatsoever about an asset that the people of Ontario own. There's nothing open and transparent about that.

Now, it's very clear that the government doesn't want us to know what they're up to. We had to scrounge our files through the gas plant hearing documents, only to

find that many were deleted. Speaker, they've gone ahead with this Hydro One sale and taken care of that. There's no sense scrounging for anything anymore; none of the agencies have any authority over Hydro One any longer. Freedom of information is no longer available for Hydro One. We don't get to know a thing—nothing, no freedom of information.

Schedule 38 removes Hydro from the sunshine list. We don't even get to see any of the details about their employees. This is one way to stop the flow of information: cut access; cut it all. This is their idea of being open and transparent: no more Auditor General, no more freedom of information, no more sunshine list disclosures—nothing, Speaker. We get nothing.

Let's take it a little further. Lobbyists don't have to register any longer for Hydro One. My gosh, Speaker, what are they hiding from us? What are they attempting to hide?

Schedule 23 excludes Hydro from oversight of the Management Board of Cabinet. They don't even want to know what's going on—just let it be.

Hydro One is also taken out of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. One of the biggest complaints we have in our MPP offices, and I'm quite certain over on the government side as well—they just don't want to tell you about it—are all the complaints we get in our offices on Hydro One, the help that isn't coming. Thankfully, it fell under the oversight of the Ombudsman, who had a scathing report and a revelation which helped families. Finally, families found some relief when this terrible activity at Hydro One was disclosed. Well, they have an answer for that, Speaker. The Ombudsman is no longer available to investigate Hydro One once the first share—one share—is sold. They saw to that in the bill. That is written into their bill.

1350

Speaker, if you could imagine the next one: the Integrity Commissioner gone from oversight over Hydro One. No integrity, Speaker; no integrity commission. But, as I said earlier, considering there's no integrity left in the system, you won't need any of those officers.

At what point does shame kick in? It's shameful that they have taken this most important public asset and hidden from us all of these oversight agencies, every single one of them. They didn't miss a trick. No Auditor General, no Financial Accountability Officer, no Ombudsman, no Integrity Commissioner—no integrity, Speaker. No more freedom of information. It's the last time that we are able to find out they spent almost \$7 million—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Northumberland–Quinte West will withdraw that comment.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Withdraw, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** No more freedom of information. This is the last time that we are able to find out that \$7 million was spent on consultants for the sale of Hydro

One, including \$24,000 for the speech writer to smooth it over in the public. No more sunshine list. This is the last time we see Sandra Pupatello's six-figure salary.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the member for Davenport to come to order. Yes, you. Thank you.

The member for Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. This is the last time we'll see Sandra Pupatello's six-figure salary or know that Carmine Marcello made \$728,000 at Hydro. All this now will be done behind closed doors, just the way the Liberal government likes it. I have to ask them, what are you guys trying to hide this time?

The reviews on the budget are not pretty, not pretty at all. Moody's offered two words: "considerable risk." Others are claiming a "deteriorating fiscal position." Another said, "The budget document is lacking in detail." Of course, we've been saying that for years, because the mid-term numbers and the long-term numbers never were in existence. So for a leading financial institution to suggest that the budget is lacking in detail is certainly not an overstatement whatsoever.

The worst thing I found, though, is on the budget's page 199. This is my favourite one. I've talked about this many times in the Legislature over the last few years. If you remember, Speaker—and I'm just going to refer to Focus on Finance, because it has the actual wording of what we saw in that chart.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, they can make all the jokes they want. I'm going to read you what was no joke. It was the Ministry of Finance's document that we uncovered during the gas plant scandal that went to their cabinet, to their finance minister and to Kathleen Wynne. It talked about this chart that they dared use yet again, on page 199 of the budget, the one that has the fake \$24.7-billion deficit number.

Here's what they have to say:

"The Ministry of Finance admits the benchmark of progress," an estimated \$24.7 billion, is complete fiction—this is their own quote now, Speaker—"was never a real expectation" and—"I'm quoting from the Ministry of Finance, the secret document we obtained in the gas plant scandal hearing—"was a deliberate policy" to project "a worst-case outcome." It was deliberately misleading. They also admit that "the path to balance"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I have to ask the member to withdraw that unparliamentary remark.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Withdraw. I'll try to parse out the unparliamentary language that was used in the confidential advice to the Premier: "The path to balance was then drawn from there, assuming a straight-line trajectory of declining deficits." So what they did is they had this number at the bottom, that they themselves call not a real expectation and a deliberate policy, and they need to get to zero. So they drew a straight line, and then filled all these in. That's exactly what they did, and they admit it here. They say, "It was assumed that spending would be



constrained to whatever it takes to hit these targets.” Somebody laid a ruler across, drew a straight line, and then filled it in and said, “Those are our budget deficit numbers. Now figure out how to make it happen.”

But they also divulged, “Over the medium term, we have notional targets by sector that add up to the deficit numbers, but not yet full plans to deliver on them. For the extended outlook, neither sector targets nor plans yet exist.” Then they conclude with, “In order to hit the deficit targets, spending growth going forward has to decrease dramatically.” Well, we all know what happened after that—nothing. It did not flatline. It didn’t decrease dramatically. We saw it go up. In fact, spending is up \$2.4 billion again this year.

So they used that same chart, the one that we disclosed here in the Legislature. They used that chart again—the nerve. It’s quite funny; I guess they ran out of charts. They used the same chart again that we outed as a chart that they said was a complete fabrication. That’s what they decided to do. Again, they couldn’t even make a new fake chart, they had to use the existing chart that they had, which leads us to ask the question: Why do they continue to make life so expensive for Ontario families?

The warning bells were ringing all around the minister, all around the Premier, all around the government that you need to do a drastic turnaround, a dramatic change. All of these outside financial organizations have said the same thing. They should have realized when Fitch downgraded Ontario’s long-term debt to AA- that maybe something is wrong, maybe the way we’re going about things here on the other side—maybe you should start to listen. They had to downgrade Ontario. Standard and Poor’s has a negative outlook on the province’s long-term debt—not a very admirable position to be in. Moody’s lowered their outlook from stable to negative. Again, after reading your budget, the two words that they came out with were “considerable risk.” Not their proudest moment.

The fastest-growing expense item is interest on debt. It’s going to increase 7% over the next three years. They’re taking money that should be going into front-line health care, and they’re using that money now to pay the interest on their debt. They’re taking money out of health care and education, and using those funds to pay off interest on their overspending. It’s their financial mismanagement alone that’s doing that. It’s not the tsunami, as the former finance minister used to say, of the recession. The recession ended for everybody else but us, apparently. They continue to make it harder for Ontarians to pay their bills.

Let’s look at some of the specific quotes from Moody’s. They acknowledge the fact that they’ve shown no progress whatsoever in decreasing debt. Moody’s told us that they continue to “see risks” in the province’s budget. They said that our “deficits have shown little progress in the past few years, and in fact”—now this was interesting, Speaker—“have increased from 8.1% of revenues ... to 9.2%” of revenue. It’s an interesting statistic from Moody’s that tells you where we really are headed.

Worst of all, they say that “provincial economic forecasts have tended to overestimate growth.”

#### 1400

They fluffed the last budget numbers, and only after four months. They presented the budget in July. Four months later, they had to come out and restate that their revenue was off by \$500 million. In four months, their budget was wrong by half a billion dollars. Now we know why they’re selling assets, why they’re increasing taxes and why they’re raising hydro bills. It’s all about asking seniors and families to pay for their 12 years of financial mismanagement.

Last week I asked a question of the Premier when she said, “We don’t believe right now that taking more money out of people’s pockets would be responsible.” Speaker, I was in the budget lock-up for seven hours, so I don’t know if the Premier has actually read her own budget if she thinks it isn’t filled with schemes to take money out of people’s pockets.

There’s the new payroll tax, which was passed at 11:45 last Wednesday morning, going for royal assent tomorrow. The payroll tax is going to put a tax on businesses. I’ll talk about that a little bit more.

A cap-and-trade tax: That’s a tax on everything. If I thought the payroll tax was the mother of all taxes, well, cap and trade, that’s going to be the mother of all taxes.

They now have, of course, the beer tax. They have another instalment on the aviation fuel tax. Increased user fees, increased hydro rates—all of those are taking money out of people’s pockets. I don’t know which of those the Premier thinks is not taking money out of people’s pockets.

Over the last few weeks, our caucus had five budget asks that were designed to make life better for those living in Ontario. We said to them, “Stop the madness. Do what all the other financial institutions, the rating agencies and everybody involved in caring about Ontario are saying: Stop putting a burden on people.”

The first thing we said was “Stop your payroll tax.” Instead of stopping this payroll tax—which is going to be a huge increase in payroll taxes; we already have the highest payroll taxes in Canada, so this is going to put us into a new stratosphere—they rammed it through. Only days later, last Wednesday at 11:45 in the morning, our party stood here to put a halt to it. The Liberal government has passed that and, sadly, on January 1, 2017, taxes will go up for businesses. Businesses will lose employees. By the government’s own admission, it could be anywhere between 18,000 and 54,000 people who lose their jobs.

We also suggested to them in one of our five asks that they cancel this foolish cap-and-trade tax as it hurts families by putting a tax on everything. We know what this is. This is the one that’s going to take all this money—three cents a litre for gas; all the other expenses that will go up; a tax on everything—and use that money to help pay their bills and lower their deficit. There’s absolutely not one nickel of this money that will go into anything to

help climate change—nothing. There's not a thing that these guys are doing that that will help.

We asked them to fix home care by reducing the number of agencies that patients must deal with. Did they listen? No. In fact, they went exactly the opposite way. They are spending now \$750 million on yet a new level of bureaucracy between the patient and their health care. Instead of the CCAC and the LHINs, we've now got these new health links. Sixty-nine of them are being formed to keep you away from your valuable medical services. Speaker, that's \$750 million for more bureaucracy.

The fourth was to ask them to make hydro more affordable. It has chased away business. It has caused families to choose between food or fuel, to decide whether to heat or eat. That's what we have in Ontario today. Speaker, you and I did not grow up in an Ontario that made families choose between food or fuel.

I've told this Legislature on a few occasions: All three parties went to many cities in the pre-budget consultations. We all went to Ottawa and we heard from Jennifer, an ODSP recipient who sat in front of us. It was heart-wrenching. She talked about the fact that she had to shut off her power from 6 o'clock every morning until noon and again from 3 every afternoon until 7 so she could afford to pay her hydro bill. Speaker, have you ever heard of anything like that in the province of Ontario, the once proud province of Ontario? We have become a have-not province with our hand out now, and we still can't give a leg up to Jennifer to help her with her hydro bill. She has to put extra sweaters on and shut her power off to be able to have enough money to buy food. What an awful scenario that is for the province of Ontario, which once had the lowest cost of energy in North America. With all of their failed plans, we are now the highest-cost jurisdiction, chasing companies out of Ontario one by one.

Think about it, Speaker. When you have companies like Heinz or Caterpillar or Kellogg's or General Mills or Wrigley's—Caterpillar is still making earth-moving equipment, just not in Ontario. Heinz still makes ketchup, just not in Ontario. They've gone to lower-cost jurisdictions. Ours is the highest-cost jurisdiction in the country—the highest energy rates in North America, the highest payroll taxes, strangling red tape that is costing businesses. This is the Ontario that this government has created.

The last ask was to present a serious, credible and detailed plan to balance the budget by 2017-18. All we got, again, was a series of fluffed-up numbers and old charts that we presented before as being fake charts. I don't understand what it will take for this government to change their ways, to stop making it so hard for Ontarians to pay their bills.

Like most MPPs, we go home on the weekends. I head up to my hometown of North Bay. Not this weekend but the weekend before I ran into a guy—I've known him for years—who has owned a manufacturing shop in North Bay for decades; a great, young business guy, a hard

worker. I asked him, "How's business? What's happening?" He's in the construction field. He said that if things don't pick up he's going to close and leave the province for other work. It's not just in our community; it's the province.

When you think about the WSIB tax that this government brought in and what it has done to the small contractors throughout Ontario, it's part of what it has done to hurt the contractors throughout Ontario.

I was at a community dinner, and a municipal councillor joined my wife and I at our table. I asked him, "How are things? What's happening in the region?"

He said, "It's like the air is coming out of our economy." That's the reality of what's out there. That is the reality of what's happening.

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** They can laugh all they want, Speaker. We don't laugh at the 500,000 men and women who woke up this morning without a job, the 300,000 of them who used to work in manufacturing; that sector is gutted.

When we were on the campaign trail, I drove from Niagara Falls to Fort Erie. I have to tell you, it was heart-wrenching to see building after building, these former manufacturing businesses from when we were the powerhouse in manufacturing, boarded up, one after another after another, all the way to Fort Erie. We all went together. All three parties went together. We drove down to Fort Erie for pre-budget consultations. On the drive back, I was ashamed. I was embarrassed. I was ashamed of what our province has become. I think of those families that put their life savings into those businesses.

#### **1410**

Not only was it Fort Erie; we also went to Fort Frances, and I took a side trip. I landed in Thunder Bay and drove throughout the north as part of the campaign. If I was embarrassed and ashamed for the people in southwestern Ontario, from Niagara Falls to Fort Erie, with all those boarded buildings, I've got to tell you, Speaker, it ripped my heart out to be home in the north. Eight out of every 10 lumber mills, logging firms, pulp and paper, anything to do with the forest—eight out of 10 are gone, because of high electricity rates, high payroll taxes, all of the things that this government is doing to cripple Ontario. Speaker, 63 of those firms are gone. Many of them will never open again. They've torn the facilities down.

Of course, when I went up to northeastern Ontario, more my neck of the woods, I drove to Iroquois Falls, where the plant is shut down now. In its heyday, it used to have more than a thousand employees—far more than a thousand employees. The remnants were there when I visited a year ago. They were struggling, hanging on. They're gone today. They're gone, Speaker.

I drove a little bit west of that, and I visited the former site of the largest power user in all of Ontario. This is the classic example of what the Auditor General told us. Under the Green Energy Act, that failed Green Energy Act that crippled our businesses and hollowed out our



manufacturing sector, the Auditor General told us that for every one job created, two to four would be lost elsewhere. I found where he's talking about. When I was in Timmins, there was this big brownfield. It used to be Xstrata Copper. It used to be the single largest user of power in all of Ontario. Bigger than any car plant, bigger than anything, was Xstrata Copper in Timmins. It's gone today.

Don't forget, the Auditor General, in December, told us that we have paid Quebec and the United States—paid Quebec and the United States—\$2.6 billion to take our surplus power. When these guys brought in the Green Energy Act, the previous Auditor General told us in the Legislature, in November 2011—they didn't know what they were doing. They brought in the Green Energy Act without doing a business plan. There was no idea what this would do in Ontario. They had no idea, as Environment Canada has told us—if you look on OSPE, the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, they have a paper out on the damage that wind power has done to Ontario. On pages 8, 11 and 12, they will tell you that wind power predominantly makes power at night. Well, they didn't know that, when they put the Green Energy Act in. So we take this power and we pay Quebec and the States to take it. The Auditor General told us: \$2.6 billion, we've spent.

So Quebec has all this cheap power now, that they were paid to take. That's not even cheap; it's negative cheap. They knocked on Xstrata Copper's door—70 kilometres from the Quebec border, if you know your geography—and they lured them across. "Why don't you cross the border? Come on over for cheap power." And they did. They crossed the border. They went 115 kilometres and reopened there, and terminated 672 men and women in Timmins, all because Ontario has the highest energy prices in North America and Quebec has amongst the cheapest. It was a no-brainer for them. They popped over, and off they go. They're at work there now. The 672 men and women no longer have jobs here. That's what has happened in Ontario.

We asked, in one of our asks, to lower power rates. What do we get instead? A 15% increase last Friday, 10% coming on November 1, and 10% on January 1. This is what is happening. People are suffering all around. We've presented five solutions, and this government didn't take any of them into account. In the budget, they could have done the right thing. They could have changed the path that we're on.

All of the financial institutions warned of what's happening. They pleaded with them—they begged them—to do the right thing. The Conference Board said they couldn't balance the budget without spending cuts. What do they do? They increased spending by \$2.4 billion.

In the report from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce—I think the title of the report, should pretty much give you an idea, Speaker. It's called *How Bad Is It?*—referring to our economy. They say, "Ontario's fiscal situation is becoming increasingly dire...." That's not very nice. They say it's "likely to reach a state of crisis

unless the province cuts spending and changes the ways it does business."

You don't know about this report? Don't your guys feed you the information? This is just a few months ago. I know they give you talking points, but you should start reading a little bit on your own. Google "*How Bad Is It?*" They'll tell you how bad it is, Speaker. They told us only a few months ago how bad it is: It's dire, a crisis. These are not good words to read in a report from the chamber of commerce.

After reading their budget, experts now talk of a "deteriorating financial position." Their financial mismanagement all boils down to the pain they are about to inflict on seniors and families. That's what is coming: more pain. Again, they continue to make it difficult for Ontario families to pay their bills.

Speaker, look at the budget deficit this year: \$10.9 billion—again, going the wrong way. It was working its way down, albeit terribly slowly. It hits \$9.2 billion as a budget deficit one day. They're crowing about that. Only a Liberal would brag about having a deficit over \$9 billion. From there we see it go to \$10.5 billion under their tutelage. Then it goes to \$10.9 billion. Speaker, it's going the wrong way. They do not understand what every financial institution in Ontario is telling them: Change the way you're running the province; you're running it into the ground. "Dire," "critical," "dramatic": These are all words that financial institutions use.

Again, they talk about the \$130 billion in infrastructure. We know that it was an old announcement: cut and paste, cut and paste.

Speaker, the ORPP, the Ontario registered pension plan, the new pension tax they're bringing in: If you look at their own once-secret document that we got in the gas plant scandal hearings—luckily we were able to go through the 300,000 documents and find one particular document that was confidential advice to the Premier—it told her that with the new payroll tax, for every \$2 billion you take out of the economy, you lose 18,000 jobs. So if this is a \$6-billion program—the one that was passed by the Liberals last Wednesday—that's 54,000 job losses that the Ministry of Finance predicts we will lose. I've used this example several times in the Legislature.

I was in London several months ago. I ran into a guy I know who has a business with 15 employees. He said, "Vic, let me tell you: When this pension tax comes through, I'm going to fire one of my employees. I'm going to take their salary, and I'm going to use it to pay my 1.9% of their tax. I know that my employees can't live on an almost 2% wage reduction, so I know they're going to have to ask for a raise. I'm going to have to top them up as well, so I'm going to have to pay their share as well. Now I'm paying a 3.8% increase. I'm going to fire one guy, use that money to pay the 3.8% tax that's coming off of me and my employees and tell them that they're going to have to work harder."

That's the reality: There is no more money in the pockets of businesses, Speaker. It's just not going to happen.

But this doesn't just hurt businesses. It hurts charities, as well. It hurts vital organizations. Think of something like the YMCA, as a good example. All of a sudden, now they've got to dig deep into their pockets and into their employees' pockets to come up with the money for this pension tax. So it's not only going to hurt business, hurt families, hurt seniors; it's now going to hurt our charities, it's going to hurt our volunteer organizations. This is going to just hollow them out like they've hollowed out the manufacturing sector in the Green Energy Act.

1420

Speaker, when you look at some of the numbers here, you can see that our revenue continues to increase—\$118 billion this year, \$124.4 billion budgeted next, \$129.4 billion, \$134.4 billion. We don't have a revenue problem in Ontario. There's nothing wrong with our revenue. We have a spending problem here. We have a spending problem in Ontario. We tax and we spend. We tax more, and we spend even more. We're spending far more money than we take in.

When you look at their spending, in fact, in every single ministry spending was up this year except for three:

- the Attorney General—congratulations. It was marginally similar to last year;

- the finance ministry—congratulations. It was down a hair; and

- tourism, down a few dollars.

All the rest were up by millions—multi-, multi-, multi-millions; as it turned out, billions: \$2.4 billion.

Let's look at what they're doing to health care. Health care was traditionally, worldwide, five and a half—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources to please come to order.

The member for Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. Traditionally, we see health care increasing five and a half to six points everywhere. Look what they're doing: health care, 1.9%—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm not sure if the Minister of Natural Resources heard, but I asked him to come to order.

The member for Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** So 1.9 % in health care this year, which is why—see, they just can't make the choices. That's what it's all about. It's about—

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Two per cent is a cut.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to warn the Minister of Natural Resources.

The member for Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. The fact that their spending on health care is 1.9% this year and 1.1% next year—this is exactly what the Auditor General warned us about, this “crowding out.” They cannot set their priorities. That's what this is all about. It's all about making choices. They choose to overspend, to have a

deficit and to use money on interest instead of on health care.

That's why in my city of North Bay, 94 full-time health care professionals were fired, including 54 RPNs, and 34 part-time health care workers were fired, including 11 RPNs; 43 employees at Ontario Northland were fired, and 54 at Nipissing University were fired, including 22 professors. This is exactly what the Auditor General warned: We will be crowded out of the services that we have come to enjoy in the province of Ontario.

That's what they've done: They've made choices. They made a choice to overspend on things like bailing out the MaRS building across the street, the \$400 million—bail it out and do it in secret, by the way—in 2010. Thankfully, a whistle-blower came forward in 2014 and showed us the paperwork or we never would have known.

You wonder, where is all our money going? Well, two previous Auditors General told us: \$1.1 billion for gas plants, \$400 million—we have an Ornge scandal. We're mired in scandals that are sucking up our money and taking it away from health care and education. That's exactly what's happening. It's all about choices, and these guys cannot choose the right path. They can't choose the decent path for families and for seniors. They refuse to do that. They chose to spend \$2.4 billion more this year and have continued deficits, which have skyrocketed, where we have a debt.

Speaker, when they took office, the debt in Ontario was \$139 billion; today, it's \$284 billion. The interest on that—they have doubled Ontario's debt in only 12 years. This is unprecedented. It took 137 years—137 years—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** The truth hurts over there.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Order. The member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker.

I do know the truth hurts; I know it does.

It took 137 years to create a debt of \$139 billion. These guys doubled it in 12 years. That's what they did. They have doubled our debt.

How are they going to continue to pay for their misdeeds? Here's how they're going to continue—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I know it hurts.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the Minister of Transportation to come to order.

The member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Here's how they're going to pay for this year's misdeeds, Speaker: They are going to, for instance, peel away the Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit. It's gone. The Ontario Production Services Tax Credit—this is going to be retroactive. These are cuts that they're making.

When you look at the things like the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit, what does that mean? Well, that's Hollywood North. There's movies and television programs that are filmed here in Toronto and a lot of them, six of them recently, in North Bay, Sudbury, all over. I can tell you that those days are about to be all over. Why? Because this Ontario Production Services Tax



Credit is going to be put in and it's retroactive. So if you have a production in Calgary or in Edmonton right now, as there are many, and do your post-production—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm asking the member for Beaches—East York to please come to order.

The member from Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you. If you have these TV series that are filmed—some are filmed in Calgary and Edmonton in Alberta. They're some westerns that we're all familiar with. The post-production comes to Ontario. Not for long. All of those jobs will either head to the States or stay where they already are in Alberta. That's what's happening with this. Most of the time, in my office, since the budget has been spent—with the television and film industry coming in and saying, "Where did this come from? Do you know what this is going to cost our production firm in dollars and what this is going to cost the production in Ontario?"

We're talking about thousands of jobs leaving Ontario and yet another misguided tax grab by this government. That's what they're doing. They cannot control their own spending, so they are going to stop the tax credits. Now they're going to get 100% of nothing instead of a smaller percentage of a big pie—100% of nothing, coming up. That's the math problem with these guys over here. They just do not know what's happening.

The Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit—another one. All the video games that are produced here—they're about to kill that sector. They do not understand. These are vital jobs here in Toronto and all over Ontario. Ottawa has a huge sector that these people are involved in.

They're killing the Apprenticeship Tax Credit. Good God. Where have you been for the last year or two? You don't realize the youth unemployment that we have. Here's a chance for young men and women to get their first job and have a tax credit, an Apprenticeship Tax Credit. What the heck is happening? You're going to take the tax credit away and make this sector—all sectors now—suffer because they can no longer have these apprentices.

1430

I cannot even begin to imagine what you have to tell these people to get them to understand the pain that they are causing young men and women, families and seniors. They leave no stone unturned here, Speaker. The hydro bills that are making families suffer, sending businesses all over the province—taking away a tax credit. They don't understand what a tax credit is. It gives you a small piece of a pie that you didn't have before. Now there will be no pie. I'm really worried about the jobs that will be lost not only here in Toronto but in northern Ontario: Sudbury, the Soo, Thunder Bay, North Bay. We all had film productions there.

Speaker, you know what they're telling us. Why? In the budget document, their key economic assumptions are that the Canadian dollar to the US will be 70.5 cents.

That's what they're forecasting, not the 90.5 cents of last year. They're saying that it's only going to be 70.5 cents. That spread in the dollar: "Well, that will be enough. That will be enough to keep you here." Oh, my heavens. You're banking on the fact that the American dollar will overpower us to such an extent that it's going to solve our economic woes. That's your idea? That's your big plan for balancing the deficit: pray that the American dollar out-strengthens us to a point that it's 70.5 cents? That's it? That's the big plan, Speaker: "We've got the American dollar coming on strong. That will solve all our problems." Damn the torpedoes; full steam ahead. Why would you need to give any breaks to companies to move from Alberta to Ontario, from Quebec to Ontario or from Hollywood to Ontario to shoot movies here? "Heck, the dollar is going to do it for us. We don't need to promote anything that's helpful to people. We don't need to do that. The dollar is going to do it all." That's their big idea.

They boast about the unemployment rate. In the last 100 months, in 99 of those 100 consecutive months, we've had higher unemployment than the national average. Congratulations, Liberals. That's your best number: 99 out of 100. That's what you get your perfect score on. That's the number that you can get a good score on, not hydro rates, not payroll taxes—well, those are the highest, so I guess you could score those well as well. It's embarrassing. When does shame kick in with these people with what they're doing to our families right across all of Ontario?

You know, Speaker, they talk about taxes in this budget: "Don't look over here. It's only a \$100-million beer tax. It's only a payroll tax. It's only a carbon tax. It's only the aviation fuel tax kicking in another penny this year. Don't worry; it's only \$100 million. Don't let little things like that worry you."

Let me tell you a story, Speaker. Because I'm from northern Ontario, let me tell you a quick story about a diamond tax.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member for Barrie to come to order.

The member from Nipissing has the floor.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** You know, Speaker, I'm a northern Ontario boy. I have a prospector's licence. I've had one for more than 30 years. Here in the north, we have prospectors who found diamonds. They found diamonds 150 kilometres due west of Attawapiskat. De Beers now has the Victor mine there. This is a classic Liberal move. Here they are, developing the mine, committed, spending billions of dollars to get it going, and what do these guys do? The first thing they did to them was put in a diamond tax. But they said, "Don't worry. We're going to tax all diamond mines in Ontario, even though you're the only one." This is the *modus operandi* of this government. They've never found a tax they don't like, and I'm sorry, I've never found a tax that created even one job in Ontario.

When you look at the Ring of Fire, where I've been four times now, and see the lack of production up there, knowing fully well that many of the companies are very hesitant, knowing these guys are chomping at the bit to raise taxes. Chromite is discovered in the Ring of Fire. Each and every company will tell you, because they've told me, "We're worried this government will bring in a chromite tax." Norm Miller asked this government, one day, if that's what they plan on doing. They would not deny it.

This is this government. This is their legacy. Their legacy is tax and spend—the highest payroll taxes in the country, the highest energy rates in North America. Friday, at 11 o'clock, their hydro rates went up 15%. That's the legacy that this Liberal government has. That is why our party, under no circumstances, could ever stand up and support a budget that continues to hurt the people—the men and women, the families and the seniors—of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I listened with interest to the remarks of the member for Nipissing. He's always a very entertaining speaker and really kept us engaged for a full hour, so that's to his credit.

There is one point that he made that I have a fundamental disagreement with, and that is about where the problem is in this budget. He challenges the government and says that the fiscal problems are on the expenditure side, not the revenue side. We disagree. The fiscal problems with this government are on the revenue side. What we see in this budget is nothing to address the lack of quality, affordable child care for children; nothing to address the fact that post-secondary education in this province is more expensive than any other province in Canada—we see university students now paying more than half of university operating costs—nothing to address the shortfalls, the cutbacks in elementary and secondary education. We see program expenditures well below inflation, not being able to take into account population growth across our communities.

The only solution that we see from the government to deal with the revenue problem is to sell off Hydro One. This has huge repercussions for all Ontarians. It is a huge concern for people in my community. I am receiving overwhelming numbers of emails from constituents who are really concerned about the implications of the privatization of Hydro One and what this is going to do to their hydro bills. We know that electricity in this province is already skyrocketing and is leaving many people feeling more and more challenged and more and more unable to pay the bills.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It's a pleasure to add my thoughts on the speech from the member from Nipissing. A couple of things: First of all, talk about loss of jobs. I think we all remember June 12. On June 13, if they were to form

government, 100,000 jobs gone—100,000 jobs. So they're the ones to talk. They're the ones to talk.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to give you more time. The Speaker of the Legislature has asked us to raise the bar in terms of decorum. I'm trying to respect the wishes of the Speaker and do my job as one of the assistant Speakers, as the First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House. I have to say that the behaviour this afternoon has not been to the standard that the Speaker would expect of us. I would ask the members to consider that for the remainder of the afternoon. We still have three hours and 20 minutes to go.

The member for Northumberland—Quinte West has the floor.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for your guidance. I was at the same meeting that we had today with the Speaker, and I respect your thoughts.

The other piece that I want to talk about is—they're talking about Hydro One, they're talking about the sale of the LCBO land. The 407: the 407, gone for 100 years. Gone; no control whatsoever, Speaker, and they have the nerve to talk about us—gone, Speaker.

1440

Speaker, let me talk about some of the points from the party of negativity. Here's Christian Provenzano, mayor of Sault Ste. Marie: "Our roads need work; our aqueducts need work. We're all aware that our water infrastructure needs some work. The budget was good news in that sense."

Charla Robinson, president of the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce: "From a Thunder Bay perspective, of course, whenever there is transit investment, there is an opportunity for Bombardier to increase their timelines and their productions, which is a good thing for creating jobs here."

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce—you tell me when you want me to stop, Speaker: "The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce applauds the Ontario government for formalizing its commitment to a fully funded rapid transit project in Hamilton in the 2015 budget...."

Speaker, that's just a few of the positive things. I see you're going to stand up, so I will stop.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure to provide a couple of comments on the member for Nipissing. He's a fine member. I very much appreciate his diligent work.

With your assistance, Speaker, I want to quote from some of the Fedeli on finance—Focus on Finance 2. I always call it "Fedeli on Finance" because I admire the member so much. I have to tell you, Speaker, he does a tremendous amount of work on this file. He's a wonderful member. I'm proud to call him a friend. I think it really shows the depth that he has studied, because at the very end he has put a number of very good observations. For those who go to fedeli.com, go down to page 98 online. It's his final thoughts, and I'm just going to read, with your indulgence, Speaker:



"Skyrocketing energy rates, new taxes and crushing red tape. From there you were provided considerable evidence that the finances in Ontario are far worse than the government has disclosed, and even among themselves, the Liberals acknowledge they have no plan to balance the budget."

He goes on in this passage on page 99, and I'm paraphrasing now; that he will continue to ask those important questions in the budget. I think I'm going to read another passage: "Companies continue to leave Ontario. And the Liberals continue to introduce new taxes."

Certainly when I spoke at my chamber of commerce, that was loud and clear. Members of that group in my city and also citizens who don't deal with business have expressed concern about the payroll tax that this government is bringing in, the carbon tax, the new beer tax—they'll charge us the beer tax, yet we get no benefit from that government decision.

Thank goodness for Vic Fedeli and his Focus on Finance 2.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to join the debate here today. I listened intently to the member from Nipissing as he valiantly dissected and disseminated the information from the budget, as he always does. I was pleased to hear some tidbits of information that I hadn't known. One was that, under the new provisions of oversight and accountability through Hydro, we will no longer know how much those executives on various boards of directors will be paid. That's a whole other area of information that we won't have and the public won't have.

However, I listened to him for an hour. He did a great job. I didn't hear much what he would do or his party would do that would be different.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** There you go.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Well, don't applaud yourselves, because you have the same plan that the Conservatives have. This is a continuation of the Mike Harris, the Ernie Eves, the Tory agenda of austerity and cuts to public service, cuts to vital aspects of our province, cuts to tax credits for apprenticeship for employers who are hiring new young workers, cuts to education—I've got five schools in my riding that are on the chopping block. Your party obviously doesn't put a priority on education. We've got funding infrastructure—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell to withdraw his unparliamentary comment that I heard a second ago.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Essex has the floor.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you, Speaker. We have infrastructure projects in my riding of Essex that have been on the books for six years, eight years, that have not been fully funded, but now they're requiring to sell off a major asset in Hydro One to finally realize the funding. It

points directly to their inability to manage the province's finances with any measure of accountability. Ontarians are going to suffer from this budget; there's no doubt.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much for the questions and comments. We now return to the member for Nipissing for his reply.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to thank the members from London West, Northumberland–Quinte West, Leeds–Grenville and Essex for their commentary as well.

At noon today, I went down to the Hilton hotel and met with Finance Minister Joe Oliver. I didn't have lunch there, mind you; I missed the lunch. But I did listen to his speech.

He talked about why it's important to balance. I said to him, "I'm going to read your points," because it was so important, why you need to balance. I know this government here likes to spend, when budget deficits went from \$9.2 billion up to \$10.5 billion up to \$10.9 billion.

Of course, the federal government has a balanced budget, and here's why: He said, "It clears the way for more tax relief." Speaker, it's refreshing to hear that when there's money, there's tax relief coming from the federal government. That's great news.

He said, "It provides confidence to the business community." I have stood in this Legislature and said that at least 25 times. Business wants to go in a solid jurisdiction.

He said, and I think this may have been his most important point, "A balanced budget meets the moral requirement of not saddling our children with debt." What an admirable thought of why he has balanced.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** These guys wouldn't know how to balance.

He talked about the targeted investments to create jobs and growth and make life better. As the feds have implemented tax credits, these guys have implemented tax credit removal. That's the difference between a balanced budget and a not-balanced budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I recognize the member for Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent for us to stand down our lead. She will come to do her lead a little bit later on this afternoon, and you get me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It is my understanding that unanimous consent on that has been sought and was granted by the House, so yes, you have the floor and you have 20 minutes for your presentation.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you so much, Speaker. I'm happy to focus my 20 minutes on the budget on some of the priorities that are within my portfolio. I will focus my talk on how the budget addresses the pressures in our health care system here in Ontario.

Just to put it into context, the health budget is the biggest budget of any ministry within our province and it stands right now at close to \$50.77 billion. It's a huge budget. The budget itself has seen an increase of 1.2%

compared to last year. This is one of the smallest increases in the health budget that we have seen. Just last year was really tough with an increase of 2.6%. This year is going to be even tougher with a 1.2% increase.

To put that into context, the CPI, the consumer price index, will increase by 1.2%. That means that any pressure that comes from population growth—and we know that Ontario grows by about the size of PEI every year; maybe 125,000 more join the ranks of Ontarians every year. That is not covered.

1450

We also know that we have an aging population, which adds a little bit of pressure on our health care system. We usually cost that at about 1%. Sure, the price index will be covered with the 1.2%, but the pressure for population growth and for an aging population—none of that is taken into account.

If we start with one of the biggest pieces of the pie within the health care system—look at hospitals. Our hospitals have lived with three years of base budget freezes. That is, for the last three years, the base budgets of our hospitals have stayed the same, and this budget announced that we are in for at least one more, and probably two more years. You're looking at five years of frozen base budgets for hospitals. What does that mean? It means that although the money coming into our hospitals stays the same, the pressure going out continues to go up.

If you look at things such as drugs: Hospitals do have to have medications to care for the people who go there. The average cost of drugs for hospital drugs goes up between 8% to 10% each and every year. They have to make do with cutting somewhere else.

I'm sure you've all seen your electric bill. The electric bills have been skyrocketing. The electricity in the hospital is just as expensive, if not more, than it is in your home. Here again, pressure is going up on the expense side but the revenues are staying the same.

The cost of wages: Most of the expenses in the hospital—they don't fabricate widgets; they provide care. Care is provided by people. People need to be compensated for the work that they do. This also puts the pressure up.

You can see where the expense side of the ledger continues to go up but the revenue side stays flat. What does that mean? That means that the difference between what they take in and the inflation of what they put out has to be balanced.

How is this balanced? It's balanced for the first two years of the flat base budget for hospitals. I must say that our hospitals stepped up to the plate. They really looked at, "How can we do things better?" They reinvented many ways of providing care. Some of them struggled from the beginning, but a lot of them were able to bring upon savings in the way that they operated through economies of scale, through streamlining of services, that allowed them to balance those pressures. Although there was no new money coming in and the cost of doing business was going up, they were able to balance that, except for a few.

Come year 3, which is the year we just ended, 152 of them—every single one of them—had a hard time balancing their budgets. They had such a hard time that they had to start to look at programs and services, as well as personnel. We saw more and more programs that used to be provided within our hospitals—our hospitals that have layers of accountability, oversight, transparency, ombudsmen, patient services—all of this that is part of assuring quality care to patients had been transferred into the community. There is nothing wrong with moving services into the community if the community is able to provide the high-quality care that you put in place, those layers of oversight to ensure quality, but none of that was done. We transferred programs and services into the community, most of the time, in a for-profit environment.

Those private, for-profit clinics—almost all of them have user fees. What does that mean? That means barriers to access. When you think about medicare, medicare is basically hospital services and physician services for free. They are available to Ontarians based on need, not on ability to pay. But the minute you move it into the community, you are not covered by medicare anymore. You are now into the private realms, and a lot of extra cost creeps in.

All of a sudden, for your colonoscopy, you will need to talk to a dietitian, and that will cost you \$45. And for your cataract surgery: "Well, that scan is not covered, but you really need it. That will be 200 bucks." "Those lenses are not covered, and they'll be 300 bucks each." What would have been a free-to-you, based-on-care—not on ability to pay—service in the hospital is now delivered in the community, but you have to pay. If you have the money, I figure it's not that bad. But for a lot of people, it is a barrier to access.

All of a sudden, our health care system, which we are so proud of, is being dismantled brick by brick, private clinic by private clinic. This budget does nothing to change that trend. This budget brings flatlined revenue to our hospitals while their cost pressures continue to go up.

The efficiencies that could be found have been found. We are at the point where we are cutting programs, we are cutting services and we are cutting staff. We are now at over 250 nursing positions alone that have been lost to the system.

I raise my hat to a lot of hospital corporations that understand how important it is to have good nurses. They have gone out of their way to make sure that they issue as few pink slips as possible and that they keep their staff. I'm really happy to see the amount of respect that most hospitals have shown the nurses and the other people who work within the hospital walls, so that nobody would be kicked to the curb—although some of them were.

But what's really happening is, the minute that somebody retires, moves to a new job, goes on maternity leave or is sick and the positions become open—they do not backfill. What ends up happening is they open positions that are casual and on call. There are lots of jobs for nurses, all right. There are lots of jobs that work week-ends, statutory holidays, Friday nights and Saturday



nights, and the rest of the time you sit by the phone and you wait for that phone call—not good care, not good jobs. This has been going on throughout our hospitals. We can foresee that for the next two years, the same thing will be going on.

But I've gone way too long just on hospitals.

The next thing in the budget that is being cut is drugs. We know that the budget has identified \$200 million per year in savings on drugs. I call that a \$200-million cut to the drug budget, although I can't understand, because this year alone, if you look, we spent \$93 million more on drugs than we had budgeted for, and now in the budget we say that we will cut \$200 million. In my mind, that's really \$293 million that we will cut from what we spent in the last year, and this will come by changing coverage and reimbursement of certain products. Well, I've been a politician long enough to know that means that some of the drugs that are covered now won't be covered anymore.

Who will be the winners? Who will be the losers? I don't know. But I can tell you that Epilepsy Ontario sent out a five-star alarm last week because there are serious shortages of some of the drugs that people with epilepsy need. As well, Ontario sort of stands out right now, with people having to pay out of pocket for oral cancer drugs if they are taken in their homes.

That was rather surprising, because we had a Minister of Health who is eloquent as to the need for pharmacare. We are housing here in Ontario the pan-Canadian group that looks at drug purchasing. All of the research coming out is telling us that if we were to have pharmacare—that is, the cost of drugs would be covered like a visit to a physician or a visit to the hospital—it would actually save the system, and the calculation, kind of middle of the road for Ontario, is close to \$1 billion. In the worst-case scenario, we would break even.

#### 1500

We have the resources here in Ontario to look at this, but did we see in the budget something positive to move our health care system forward? Not at all. We saw the opposite. We saw a \$200-million cut to the Ontario Drug Benefit Program that is already \$93 million in the hole, so not going in the right direction.

When we look at laboratory services, it is a \$50-million cut that is in the budget for lab services. This is always worrisome, given that most diagnostics are often based on lab tests. If those lab tests are not available anymore, it becomes more and more difficult to do diagnostics.

If you look at the Assistive Devices Program—this is if you need a hearing aid, a walker, an electric wheelchair, a communication board or any kind of assistive device—they are planning a \$20-million cut in that program. This is also worrisome, because as the population ages, one of the ways to support them in their houses is through assistive devices: Make sure they don't fall, make sure they have grab bars, make sure they have the support around so that as they age and become frailer, they can stay in their homes safely. But we're not looking at improving that, Speaker. We're looking at cutting \$20

million, and in the budget it says specifically for mobility devices. This is a problem. But we had the opportunity to do better.

If you look at colostomy patients, they have had the same amount of reimbursement since 1993. If anybody can figure out a way to pay 1993 prices for colostomy supplies, please let us know. I can tell you that I have shopped around in my community to find the cheapest, and none of them are the same price they were 22 years ago. That was an opportunity to change, but here again we are seeing it go in the opposite direction, with a cut of \$20 million in that program.

If you look at home and community care, there is some good news there. In home and community care, they are making a \$750-million investment. The investment in home and community care is really focused on complex care. What we do in Ontario is that we leave elderly people in their homes with very, very little support. The typical scenario is that they don't eat properly, they don't take their meds properly, they are very isolated, they get dizzy, they fall, they break a hip and they end up in the emergency department. From the emergency department, they get admitted into our hospitals. The hip gets fixed all right, but then they need a ton of support to go back home.

If you look at what Quebec does, Quebec invests less money than we do in home care, but they do this up front. The minute you turn 75, you get a friendly visit that comes to your home. They look around as to, "How do we make sure you take your medications properly, that you eat properly, that you are supported, that you have the grab bars and walking aids to make sure you don't have a fall?" It's a whole lot cheaper to do that kind of upfront prevention with older, frailer people than it is to pay to support them.

If you look at where the \$750 million will go, it goes with a patient with complex care needs. It goes to 69 community health links. I have no problem with community health links. They are there to look after people who have very, very high needs. But you see the trend, Speaker. The trend is that we don't invest in basic disease prevention and health promotion for elderly seniors. We wait until they get into trouble to start to support them. A little bit of support ahead of a traumatic injury or a traumatic turn of events in their life would go a whole lot further in keeping them happy and safer. After a fall, they are always—we're human beings. You've fallen, you've hurt yourself and you ended up in the hospital. They will be fearful, and this is wrong. A lot of this could have been prevented with a little bit of health care dollars focused on prevention, but it is not there.

My God, 20 minutes goes by fast, eh, Speaker?

I also see that for the PSWs, there had been a promise of \$4 more an hour. Everybody understood that. Last year, they were getting \$1.50, this year \$1.50, and next year \$1, to make a total of \$4. Now, when we push a little bit, it's like, "It will be \$4 over three years, but we don't really know when the next \$1.50 is going to come." When we don't really know, I will assume that it's

because it's not coming this year, and God knows when it will come.

We talk about—there is still lots. I wanted to talk about primary care. Primary care is the door that opens the door. It's the people that you see when you need care. They are family physicians, nurse practitioners, either in an aboriginal health access centre, in a community health centre, in a family health team, in a nurse-practitioner-led clinic. Those are all different models of primary health care.

Well, the family health teams have been put on hold, with a trickling of replacement workers in there, and God knows where they will go. They're supposed to go to areas of high needs, but those areas have not been shared with anybody. It's causing a lot of grief with new physicians that have trained, that are ready to join teams. This is what they want to do. This is what we want them to do. Now there are no positions opening up in those family health teams because the government has put a moratorium on them.

If you look at the community health centres, family health teams and nurse practitioner-led clinics, there's a wage gap disparity that is just unbelievable. A nurse-practitioner-led clinic first started in Sudbury, right next to where I was working. We are really proud of them. They do a very good job. But they can't recruit and retain a stable workforce because they are the lowest-paid nurse practitioners in the entire system. They can go to the hospital, they can go to the CCACs, they can go to the LHINs—they can go pretty well anywhere—and make \$20,000 to \$30,000 more to do pretty much the exact same job, and, I would tell you, in some cases with a whole lot less responsibility than when you have your own caseload. This needed to be addressed. There's not a peep about this in the budget.

Unfortunately, I still had lots more to say about the cuts to health care but I've run out of time. Thank you for listening to me.

**The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I thank the member for her comments. One of the nice things about—there are two pieces. I only have two minutes here, but I want to focus quickly on health care and our continued investments in health care.

When we were elected in 2003, in my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan, there were 35,000 of what were referred to as orphan patients. Those are people who do not have direct access to a primary care provider. The number is actually staggering when you think about it: 35,000. With our investments since 2003 continuing in this budget—the health care budget again going up—the number of people now referred to as orphan patients in our area is down to 13,000 or thereabouts. It's not my number; that's an OMA number.

There has been significant progress made on this front, primarily due to the hiring of new doctors—5,600 more doctors than in 2003—24,000 more nurses working than in 2003, the opening of nurse practitioner clinics for the

first time in the history of the province of Ontario, family health teams, and expanding our community health centres. A variety of policy initiatives have helped to bring that number down significantly. There is still more work to be done, but great work being done so far.

**1510**

As well on infrastructure—I mentioned this briefly last week—the plant in my riding, Bombardier, when we were elected, had 200 to 250 people working in it. That plant is now up to 1,400 people, an increase of 1,200 people being employed in that plant, directly connected to our investments in infrastructure. The previous government was not committed to it. That was their policy choice. That was fine. We came in. We have made a series of massive investments in mass transit infrastructure. That has led directly to 1,200 more people working at the plant in Thunder Bay, having a huge, positive impact on the economy of Thunder Bay and the surrounding area.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** It's a pleasure to rise and add my comments to the member from Nickel Belt. I do share some of the same concerns. In fact, this past week I was at meetings with long-term-care health professionals in our riding who can't find help or can't afford to pay them, which is something that the member mentioned. A lot of these health care workers can go to agencies that have been set up by this government and they'll automatically receive \$20,000 or \$30,000 raises for doing much the same work. So they're in a real conundrum right now.

Also, we have health care workers, as we have just found out in my riding, who had full-time jobs and are now being cut back to three days a week, in some cases, in our hospitals. It has nothing to do with not wanting to give the quality of care that they wish to give; it's about the government's flatlining of the monies that they give to our hospitals in the last year. It's going to continue on, certainly with this budget.

Hospitals share the same things as industries do; certainly energy costs. Energy costs have risen, and they are carrying all these other costs. I believe the member mentioned that pharmaceuticals are going up, yet the health care system is flatlined. So how are these CEOs of hospitals and other institutions to balance their books? They start laying off people or they don't hire people or they cut wages or they cut them back to part-time instead of full-time.

I can understand the frustration that the member from Nickel Belt showed in her comments, but again, if we hadn't had the mismanagement of our finances over the last number of years like we've had with this government over here, certainly we might have been looking at a different situation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Boy, if there's anyone in this Legislature who knows the health budget, the health file,



inside and out, it's the member from Nickel Belt. I tell you, she is on top of this, and you're not going to pull the wool over her eyes when it comes to health care spending. When she says that the budget is going up only by 1.2% and that last year it was 2.6%, she knows what she's talking about and she knows the impact that will have on our health care system.

Now, when I read the budget—and Speaker, I have read the budget—when you consider that there's \$11 billion going in over 10 years as grants for capital projects on hospitals, I know that, in my area, Windsor is one of 40 hospital projects across the province either in the planning stage or in various phases of construction. If you're only putting \$10 billion or \$11 billion over 10 years—and I'll have to check with the member from Essex, but I believe the cost of the proposed new hospital, the mega hospital in Windsor, is close to \$1.5 billion—and there are 40 projects out there, obviously there's not going to be enough money to finalize all of these projects that are in the pipeline at one stage or another.

We all know that with an aging population and outdated hospitals we need more facilities, and you save money in the long run when you build new facilities. You give them all different flooring, geometric—you get them all set up so that you can handle more patients with fewer staff and you don't have to pay as much for air conditioning, heat and all of that. But there is not enough money in there just on the hospital file alone. Thank you for your time this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** I'm speaking in favour of this bill. I know that this budget took a lot of work. Yes, there are some decisions that were very difficult to make. The opposition would like us to spend less. The third party would like us to spend more. The good news is that we are trying to balance things. We're trying to balance the budget. We're trying to balance keeping services and not hurting constituents, so that we can go on and have something for everyone as we go through this budget.

This budget is about creating jobs and increasing the economic growth in Ontario, which is very important. We're doing this by building infrastructure. In order to build infrastructure, you need money. We do not want to go further into debt, so yes, we have made a tough decision. No one likes to do some of the things that we've had to do, but we are making sure that we are protected and we are taking good care of our resources.

When we ran in June, we made it very clear that we would be looking into the assets that Ontario owns in order to maximize those assets, and we have done so.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Pardon me?

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** All right.

Also, we're going to strengthen retirement security. If you saw the article in the Star today, 68% of people said that they wanted the CPP to be strengthened. They be-

lieve that people need more money to survive, and we are doing that through the Ontario registered pension plan.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Nickel Belt has two minutes to reply.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is interesting that the minister talked about the number of orphaned patients. The facts are there, Speaker. We still have 900,000 people in Ontario who don't have access to primary care. This number has been pretty stable. We were at a million; we're now at 900,000 people over 12 years that the Liberals have been in power. This is nothing to be proud of.

When we look at some of the comments specifically on the budget, we hear things like how in fact, this budget plans for lower increases in health care spending over the next three years than any period in modern history. According to the latest figures from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, CIHI, per capita health spending in Ontario is ranked ninth out of 10 provinces, at an estimated \$3,700 per person, which compares very poorly to our cousins all the way around.

They had possibilities to do things differently. We had a possibility to address the human needs, to bring forward a pharmacare program, to bring daycare, to bring long-term care, to bring visual and oral care back to programs of the ministry, to fully fund assistive devices so that people can stay in their homes. But it requires leadership, it requires doing things differently, and we did not see any of that in the budget. We saw doing things the same way as before with less money.

This is not leadership, this is not a way forward and this is not what Ontarians want. They want their health care system to be there in their times of need, and by taking it apart brick by brick, we will do damage to it, not help it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** It's a pleasure to rise in this House today. I will be sharing my time with the members from Mississauga—Streetsville, Etobicoke—Lakeshore and Ottawa South.

It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak about Bill 91, the Building Ontario Up Act. Our government has always been committed to putting Ontarians first and ensuring that the future of our province is as bright and prosperous as possible. This is why we have moved forward on unlocking provincial assets to support the largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history, and it is why we are building Ontario up by investing in priorities that raise Ontarians' standard of living by creating jobs, expanding opportunity and growing our economy.

1520

The positive reaction and feedback from many individuals and organizations across our province regarding our budget goes to show that people not only understand, but respect the decisions we are making to help Ontario thrive. In my riding of Burlington, our mayor, Rick Goldring, had the following to say about our budget, "We

are especially pleased to see the commitment to renewing and expanding public infrastructure. The investment in transit, particularly the planned electrification of GO Transit trains and 15-minute service on the Lakeshore West line in the next five to 10 years will benefit our residents, as well as serve as an added attraction for business investment in our city. The budget also reaffirms the province's commitment to the redevelopment and expansion of Joseph Brant Hospital."

Over the past year, I've had the opportunity to speak with a diverse range of stakeholders in our community about what kind of city we want and how, working together, we can bring that to fruition. Whether speaking with our business community, youth or seniors, these conversations have all underscored a common theme: the need for investments in transit and transportation infrastructure in Burlington and the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

When we look at how to best attract jobs and investment, how to move goods to market and how to connect communities, investments in transportation infrastructure, including investments in transit and active transportation, are front and centre. We know that people who live in communities where they have a choice of travel options, including transit and active travel, as I mentioned—these communities and their citizens not only enjoy health and environmental benefits from increased exercise and cleaner air, but they also enjoy increased economic stability and productivity.

Recently, I had the opportunity to hear from transit users in our community at a local forum organized by Burlington for Accessible Sustainable Transit, or BFAST. Residents shared their transit experiences, including some of the things we're doing well in Burlington, as well as areas of needed improvement. We heard from seniors, youth, daily commuters and people with physical disabilities about the importance of continued access to and investment in transit and active transportation options like cycling and walking. This was a rich opportunity to engage with citizens in Burlington, and it underscored the ongoing need for transit investments in our community.

This budget puts forward a comprehensive plan to make an unprecedented investment of more than \$130 billion in public infrastructure over the next 10 years—an overdue investment indeed. This includes increasing the dedicated funding for Moving Ontario Forward to \$31.5 billion over 10 years and investing \$16 billion in transit projects in the GTHA. This increase is made possible by our higher target from the province's asset optimization plan and means that residents in Burlington will benefit from improvements to services across the GO Transit network, including a transition to electrified regional express rail and moving service on the Lakeshore West GO line to two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes.

This will help members of my community get to work and school, and get them home sooner. It will also serve to reduce the number of cars on the road, reducing traffic congestion, and since 20% of GHG emissions come from

the transportation sector, this will also serve to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Health care is another topic of frequent conversation with my constituents. Ontario is investing in our province's and in Burlington's future by committing \$11 billion in hospital capital grants over 10 years. Construction has already begun on the redevelopment of Joseph Brant Hospital. I am so proud of that, because this is the first investment in our hospital in 44 years. This will include a new seven-storey tower and renovations to existing space to accommodate expanded in-patient and ambulatory services, with completion in 2018.

Attracting jobs and investment to Burlington includes a focus on our young people. I know this is a preoccupation for parents in my riding. Ontario students are key to our province's economic future. Investments in education lead to a competitive workforce that responds to labour market demands.

The government is investing \$20 million to launch Experience Ontario, a new pilot program that will support graduating high school students to better identify future goals, choose the most appropriate post-secondary education and succeed once they enrol.

When it comes to our economic security and vitality, Ontario is on target to balance the budget by 2017-18 as a result of sound fiscal management, controlling spending and a relentless focus on finding smarter and better ways to deliver services. This year marks the sixth year in a row that program spending is expected to be lower than forecast. In fact, Ontario has the lowest-cost government per capita in the country.

In closing, investing in infrastructure and in the skills of our greatest asset, our people—and in particular our young people—while at the same time managing a careful review of our assets, as well as a prudent review of how we invest taxpayer dollars, requires leadership and a steady hand.

Ontarians elected us to build Ontario up and that is exactly what we are doing. I urge all members of this House to join us in building Ontario up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** It's a pleasure to rise in the Legislature this afternoon to speak to budget 2015. This budget is creating jobs and increasing economic growth. We have priority investment areas that we have focused on: building infrastructure, investing in people's talent and skills, creating an innovative and dynamic business climate, and strengthening retirement security.

Mr. Speaker, especially on the infrastructure issue, renewing and expanding our roads, bridges and public infrastructure supports Ontario's industries, creates jobs and positions Ontario to better compete in the global economy while still meeting all of our other requirements in education and health care.

When Ontario invests, it is building. When it is building, it is growing. This is about ensuring our economic competitiveness through taking action to secure the timely delivery of our goods to market and to substantial-



ly reduce gridlock. Commuting times have increased by 12%, and this costs our economy \$11 billion a year in lost time and productivity. That deficit is a deficit that we are tackling, and we have to tackle it quickly to ensure that Ontario remains competitive.

Mr. Speaker, we're doing a number of other things. I don't want you to just take my word for what we're doing. On the environmental front, I would like to share with you what the Canadian Environmental Law Association has said about our budget: "The Canadian Environmental Law Association welcomed confirmation of the recently announced Ontario Electricity Support Program in today's provincial budget. This program will provide much-needed relief to low-income families suffering from 'energy poverty' where too much of their family income is eaten up by energy costs.

"Other highlights included confirmation of the province's choice to join Quebec and California in a cap-and-trade system to put a price on carbon and fight climate change."

On the issue of car insurance, this is what Matthew Turack, president of the CAA, had to say: "CAA welcomes the government's announcement requiring Ontario's auto insurance companies to offer a winter tire discount. Since 2011, CAA Insurance has been offering a winter tire discount to its policyholders. These chances not only provide drivers with an incentive to equip their vehicle with four matching winter tires, but it will help to keep Ontario's roads and road users safe during the winter season."

On the health care front, the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario has said, "RPNAO supports a number of the health care initiatives put forward by the provincial government, including its continued funding for mental health and addiction services, and additional support to improve the quality of palliative care in Ontario. We're also encouraged by the government's commitment to have all categories of nurses work to their full scope of practice, reflecting the understanding that RPNs are highly skilled professionals that are part of the solution to the challenges facing health care. These are all positive steps that we applaud."

Earlier this afternoon, I had the privilege of attending a Transport Futures conference, just down the road, and to be part of the panel with my colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party, as well as a member of the Ontario Green Party. That panel was to discuss P3s. Mr. Speaker, you'll be pleased to hear that all panel members—from every party—agreed that there is an infrastructure deficit and that we need to continue to invest more in infrastructure.

You will be pleased also to hear that, in fact, my colleagues from across the floor also indicated that P3s, alternative financing and procurement, is a suitable way to build this infrastructure. There was remarkable agreement. There are some challenges, and there is some disagreement about precisely how we do it, but there was agreement that we need to build infrastructure and that

the government is on the right track to build the infrastructure and to create the services that Ontarians need.

I'm happy to yield the floor to my colleague from Ottawa South, Mr. Speaker.

1530

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 91, the Building Ontario Up Act, 2015. I'd like to congratulate the minister on bringing forward his second budget. I'd especially like to say thank you to all those dedicated public servants who worked tirelessly over a period of a few months, not just in the Ministry of Finance—especially in the Ministry of Finance—but across all ministries to build a document that's really about the direction that we're taking with those things that are priorities to Ontarians.

The budget builds on budget 2014. It focuses on creating jobs and increasing economic growth while keeping us on the path to balance. It does this by prioritizing investments that build infrastructure, that recognize and support our people's talents and skills, create a dynamic and innovative business climate and strengthen retirement security.

Monsieur le Président, le budget 2015 appuie les choses les plus importantes pour nos familles : de bonnes écoles pour nos enfants; d'excellents soins de santé; des investissements dans l'infrastructure pour le transport en commun pour améliorer l'économie, les emplois et la qualité de vie; et l'appui pour les personnes les plus vulnérables dans notre communauté.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to applaud the investment in public transit. To the Minister of Transportation, I know that in my community of Ottawa South the second phase of light rail and public transit in Ottawa is very important to families. It's important that we get people home on time but that we also make sure that products and goods get to the places that they need to and that our roads are not congested.

I would like to speak to some things in the budget that aren't the biggest lines in the budget but I think are very important in our supportive communities. One is the seniors' grant program. There are a couple of programs in my riding of Ottawa South that benefited from that. The Somali centre for families ran a seniors' program that was very successful—not a big grant; very small. Holy Cross church had a seniors' group as well that was very supported by that.

Often we don't see the small grants that we make to people in our communities where we leverage more than the dollar-for-dollar we do in many other investments. We support those volunteer efforts in communities, as is in the budget with palliative care and our partnering with Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, to help strengthen and build the volunteer network that exists already in Ontario.

The volunteer efforts, the community efforts, are so important to palliative care. It's one of the items that I have in my mandate letter. I'm very passionate about it. I'm very encouraged by this line in the budget.

I do want to speak to a couple of things that actually talk about the future. I heard members opposite today talk about the ORPP as a tax. It's not a tax; it's about retirement security.

I've also heard people talk about climate change, and addressing cap and trade as a tax. What I have heard, too, quite frankly, is, with all due respect, a number of members not looking forward towards the future and thinking about where we're going to be 35 years from now. How do we actually make sure that our children's children have a place they can live? How do we ensure that our children and our children's children have some retirement security?

I appreciate the commentary, but I do have to say that I really don't want to leave the environment to our grandchildren. I don't want to leave retirement security to our grandchildren. I would suggest that the party opposite put some effort into encouraging the current federal government to increase CPP and to look at augmenting it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Sometimes the best way to look at what a city, a province, a region or even a country is doing is to look at it from the perspective of others, so let's do that with public infrastructure.

We in Canada used to feel confident that we had the best airports and highways, roads and bridges, water and electricity, public buildings and so on. But if you look abroad, both in the United States in a lot of respects and especially in Asia, it shows you that the world is in fact surpassing Ontario. All you have to do is to fly into any major Asian city such as Hong Kong or, as I've just done recently, Seoul.

The right-wing faction in this Legislature, which takes its marching orders from the Tea Party in the United States, has opposed Ontario's assistance to industry, particularly the auto industry in 2008-09. That group would have had us abrogate legally negotiated collective agreements—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Okay. I have to ask the Conservative members in particular to come to order.

The member for Mississauga—Streetsville has the floor.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** That group would have had us abrogate legally negotiated collective agreements right at the depths of the recession. That's why they have only governed Ontario for eight of the last 30 years.

Ontario borrowed a lot of money during the recession—a lot of money. This province and our government borrowed all that money because the only option worse than borrowing that money was not borrowing it. It meant more than half a million Ontarians didn't see their careers torched. It also meant that Ontario emerged from the recession, by which I mean recovered all of the jobs lost during the recession, more than three years ahead of the United States.

What are Ontario's options in this budget to stay competitive with infrastructure? There aren't that many. Let's look at some of the ones that have been discussed in this Legislature.

Number one is to do nothing. That's what the parties opposite would have us do: Just ignore the problem.

Number two: Raise taxes.

Number three: Borrow more money.

Number four: Disassemble health care and education. We're not interested in that.

Let's just quickly look at those options.

Doing nothing doesn't mean that things stay the same. It means they get worse as roads and sewers, transit, electricity generation and transmission, public facilities, all of those things that we need, decay from neglect and become more expensive to either build or renew, and also are used by millions more people as our population will increase. Yet this is what the PCs and the NDP would have Ontario do. Doing nothing is an irresponsible non-starter.

Raising general taxes and borrowing money are also non-starters. Though Ontarians pay some of the lowest taxes in North America and in Europe, your price of good government can't be out of sync with the neighbouring states and jurisdictions here in North America. They are now low, and Ontario will not give away that competitive advantage.

Similarly, the extra borrowing that enabled millions of Ontario families to stay afloat during the worst recession since the Great Depression also means that Ontario needs to return to the type of structural surplus that this province had in 2006, 2007 and 2008, on a Liberal watch, to bring down our accumulated debt.

Finally, cannibalizing what Ontario has made viable and world-class to build what Ontario currently needs is a zero sum robbing of Peter to pay Paul.

That's why this budget approaches investing in transit in the way it does. It means southern Ontario won't choke on its traffic. It means Ontario will balance its budget on time and again resume paying down the accumulated debt. It also means that public services rebuilt so painstakingly in the last 12 years will be preserved. That's the Ontario that we expect.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** It's a pleasure to rise and address the comments from all of the members on the other side who spoke for the last 20 minutes.

It's interesting: The only thing that has grown in this province is debt, debt and more debt. That's the only thing that has grown in this province, because we still have the highest unemployment. We've had, for almost the last eight years, I think it is, the highest unemployment numbers in the country. So I don't understand where they come from with the job creation business, except for this: We have more people working on minimum wage in this province than we've ever had. If those are the good jobs they're talking about, they certainly missed the boat.



## 1540

Carbon tax, payroll tax—that's what they are. They are just taxes. The payroll tax will not benefit anybody for years down the road, yet our people are going to be asked to pay it.

The budget certainly is nothing more than trying to get out of the mess they're in by selling assets, which hasn't been very well thought out at all. When you start selling assets off, especially when you're in trouble—

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Fire sale.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:**—using, as the member here says, a fire sale, a lot of the time you don't get out of it what you should be getting out of it. You won't get the value of it. Now they want to change the law that says they don't have to pay down the debt that Hydro has. They're going to use it for something else. Speaker, that is not good economic sense. It doesn't make sense.

Of course, we know that they bought MaRS, and nobody knew about it a couple of months ago, and that certainly has not panned out as well as they had hoped. Unfortunately, their budget is based on a lot of hope, and that is not good business management.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to weigh in on this. It's really interesting to listen to some of the commentary. The member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore is right. We were just on a panel on the value of P3s and the questions that are out there. Obviously, the Auditor General raised a lot of questions, and so this conversation has been very welcome for us.

At the panel, though, I did raise the issue of the lowest bidder, because this is a huge concern, I think, and I raised the issue of qualitative bidding for the province of Ontario. We have so many examples of how the process is not working, how this province is not making the sound financial decisions going forward. That's because they've really accelerated a privatization agenda which is not serving the people of this province.

I look at the most recent Auditor General's report, the winter highway maintenance—this just came out last week. On this one particular issue around procuring the lowest-bidding contractor: It can cost more in the long run. It's right there in black and white. I really hope that this government is paying attention. She notes, "We noted one case where the second-lowest bidder for a contract had a much greater equipment complement than the lowest bidder, which won the contract. Specifically, for an annual contract price of only \$700,000...." But then it turned out that they didn't have the equipment to do the job, and it ended up costing the ministry \$1.7 million for 13 additional pieces of equipment. So the due diligence, the financial oversight, was not there.

It's a growing trend. Actually, this Auditor General's report builds on the last AG report, where we found out that we paid an extra \$6.5 billion in financing costs. The province should not be borrowing money at credit card rates when we can borrow money at the lowest interest rates in the history of the province.

So I really do urge the government, in the face of this budget, to look at their processes and their practices of contracting out and privatizing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** One of the things that has been the centrepiece of this budget is the investment in infrastructure across Ontario: \$130 billion over 10 years, and of course, \$31.5 billion of that going to infrastructure. The thing that has been most interesting to my constituents, and actually, I think, to your constituents, Speaker, as well, is that included in that transportation and transit infrastructure budget is the funding to complete the four-laning of Highway 7 between Kitchener and Guelph. That's a project in which there's a lot of local interest, including in Wellington county, which is getting quite fed up with all the traffic over county roads trying to avoid the current congested highway. So this is welcome in both your constituency and mine, Speaker.

The other project, of course, that has gotten a lot of attention in your riding and mine is the GO service along the Kitchener route. With this budget, we will be increasing the number of trains on that route. The travel time will actually get shorter because some of the improvements that are being made on the east end of the route from Bramalea—once they actually get to Bramalea, it will be express service. I don't know about you, but one of the things I've heard from folks in Guelph is that while they love having the trains, they do take a long time when they have to stop at absolutely every stop. So the fact that it will be express partway in will really shorten the trip.

The next time I get a chance to comment, I'd love to tell you about the infrastructure in the Minister of Education's budget. I did a groundbreaking for a new Catholic school in your riding this morning—part of the money that's in this budget for infrastructure.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. Questions and comments.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It certainly has been interesting to be in here this afternoon, listening to all of the speeches about the budget.

I'm going to talk a little bit about, in my short two minutes here—I'm going to have another 20 minutes that I'll be able to indulge you with some good facts.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks for the warning.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** That's not very nice. That's very inappropriate. We all have the right to speak in here.

Anyway, I want to talk about my colleague from Nipissing—the Fedeli Focus on Finance. Vic is one of those guys who pores through and really puts detail into it. He provides good, factual information in this House that perhaps would be good for the public to know.

One of the things he talked about was repeated promises. It's pretty appropriate for me, coming from Wiarton Willie country, that it was like Groundhog Day: the same promises made again, that same \$130 billion. But what he really shared with the people of Ontario, which they should know, is that they were only going to need a fire

sale of \$3 billion to fund that in last year's budget; now it has increased to \$9 billion. At some point, you run out of assets to use in the fire sale to try to make your budget balance.

He talked about stripping away transparency from the Auditor General. He talked about removing oversight from the integrity officer. He talked about the removal of Ombudsman oversight and the removal of freedom-of-information requests to things like the gas plants boondoggle. If we didn't have that freedom-of-information opportunity, we may never have found that they wasted a billion dollars, of which the taxpayers of Ontario got zero from a hydro and power perspective.

There was no reduction of hydro rates, one of the things that I hear and that I'm sure you do in your office, Mr. Speaker, every single day from a multitude of people. There was no reduction of debt. They're spending \$11 billion in interest. That means no services to the least fortunate in our community: parents and residents of Community Living, who are trying to figure out, "Where are my children going to be in another couple of years? Who's going to take care of them?" Seniors, health care, schools: No money is going to those, which could be if that \$11 billion was in the pot to be able to go to projects as opposed to just those interest payments, and no reduction of their addiction to overspending.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of day I'm going to talk more about this, and I'm sure you'll be highly entertained.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** One of the government members now has the opportunity to respond. I recognize the member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to respond. Thanks to the members from Perth–Wellington and Kitchener–Waterloo, the Minister of Education and the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who just spoke.

To the member from Kitchener–Waterloo: I was at committee with her, as well, when we were discussing AFPs, and the Auditor General clearly did not say, "You shouldn't be doing this." AFPs create the ability to provide some rigour in construction. They also increase our capacity to borrow by transferring risk. It has been used across jurisdictions in the world successfully. So I would just like to respond to her in that way.

As for the member from Perth–Wellington, he talks about debt and tax; that the ORPP is a tax and that cap-and-trade is a tax. He used the phrase "years down the road." That's the point: It's years down the road. That's one of the things we're here to think about. We're here to think about 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 50 years down the road. We have a responsibility to do that, and I think those things that we're putting forward address concerns that are 30 years down the road, respectfully.

To the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, from the party that sold the 407, I don't think you should be talking about fire sales. But that's not really what I wanted to address in your comments.

**1550**

What I wanted to say was this: Yes, there is an interest payment on the debt. But in 2008–09, we had a choice.

We had a choice to cut services, the kinds of services that you're talking about. What are the things that cost us the most money? They are health care; they are education; they are support for the most vulnerable. Those are the things that we continue to invest in to make sure that families have those services. We had to make that choice, and I think it was the right one to do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's going to be a delight to talk about this budget for 20 minutes, but sadly, it's not a delight for the province and the taxpayers of Ontario, because they continue to be buried in debt and deficit.

They can talk all they want about the platitudes, about all the building up of the province, but they've had 12 years. I think if you asked most people today a very frank question, "Are you better off or are you not?" most people, like us, are going to say, "Absolutely not."

They can put all the stuffing in the window they want to try to make it look wonderful. They try in this House to use their speeches to say the province is rosy. But I think if you talk to those people in my constituency, those less fortunate people whose hydro rates continue to eat more and more and more of their budget, with the billions of dollars they have wasted in their boondoggles over their tenure, they are not better off. This budget, sadly, did not do much to address any of that.

I'm going to start off a little bit by talking, again—one of the first speakers in here was our finance critic, Vic Fedeli from Nipissing. He has produced the Fedeli Focus on Finance. Again, he very much has delved into this. He has taken time to look at this budget very carefully. He looked at the last budget very carefully.

One of the things that he said right off the bat was that, again, if you look at this budget, it's almost a mirror of the last budget. In Warton Willie country, where I come from, we have Groundhog Day once a year. This is, sadly, like the American Groundhog Day where it just keeps replaying. It's a sad, sad movie to wake up to for those people who go without because of the things that this government is doing and the added taxes, the additional times they're digging into our pocket for things like a carbon tax now, to ask for more to cover their addiction to spending.

He talked about some things that are very, very important. He talked about stripping away the transparency. They have removed the right for the Auditor General to review Hydro One's books: unbelievable, after all the things that they have messed up in the energy sector. They are now not going to allow the people of Ontario to have a look at how they run their books and the shell game that they've perpetuated over their 12 years.

We keep hearing from over there that they had to clean up messes. Well, if you can't clean it up in 12 years, it's probably time for you to go. By the way, if you were going to at least start doing some things, like stopping your addiction to spending and lowering the debt and the deficit for our poor youth, those pages in front of you—\$23,000. Every single child born into this



great province starts their life off \$23,000 in debt. That's not acceptable.

They removed the Financial Accountability Officer's ability to look into many of the programs across their mandate. They removed oversight from the integrity officer into Hydro One. They removed the Ombudsman's ability to look into the goings-on behind closed doors of this government.

We know that lots of things have happened: Ornge, eHealth, those types of things. The agreements that they created and the payments that were paid to people like Mazza to do those types of things are just deplorable and unacceptable.

They removed the freedom-of-information request. If we had not had that for the gas plant boondoggle—they were standing in this House and saying it was going to be a \$40-million hit. Sadly, I think the public of Ontario would still be accepting of a \$40-million bungle by this government, because those are pretty low numbers for them. But it came out to be \$1.2 billion, and this budget is not—

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. Point of order.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Pursuant to standing order 23(b)(i), the member isn't talking about anything close to the bill, and I would ask the member to get back to the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I listened very carefully, and I'll allow the member to continue.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's sad that a member of the government House does not believe that any of the things that I've just said are part of their budget. Perhaps he should read the budget.

It's a sad state. I'm sure that the people of Ontario truly understand what's going on, and there's a member yet again trying to suggest to us that there is not debt in this budget, that they have not overspent in this budget. I'm trying to let the people of Ontario know very clearly that that is the case.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** A member in leadership.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** A member in leadership, no doubt. I'm going to continue to try to bring the things of this budget that were challenging for me, and more importantly, challenging to the people that I've been given the privilege and honour to represent in this House. We did not see any reduction in hydro rates. In fact, with this fire sale of Hydro one, we believe, at the end of the day, the taxpayer, the senior on fixed income, most of our utilities, those administrations like hospitals and schools are going to be paying even more. The small business owner, who is the engine of our economy, is going to be paying more. The senior on a fixed income, the people from Community Living, those less fortunate people across all—as critic I have the privilege of representing community and social services and long-term care and seniors. They are going to be paying much more in hydro rates because of this fire sale.

We did not see a reduction of the debt. I'm going to say this at every opportunity I get to stand in this House and speak: \$11 billion a year is spent by this government on debt and interest payments. That has not come down. We had to see something in there indicating that number was going to come down because people are not, then, getting the services they deserve and have paid into, things like the least fortunate—I had a group of parents come to me and ask me to attend a meeting of theirs. They are parents of children, mostly adult children that are in community and social services, particularly in Community Living. Up until this point in their lives, they've been able to stay at home and live with them and they've been able to provide care for them. But they're advancing in age, and they're starting to worry, "Where will my child go if something happens to me?" We're all going to get to that same destination, so it's a very valid point. They ask me, "How can a government stand here and spend \$11 billion on interest payments but not give me some assurance that my son or daughter is actually going to have a facility and programs and services to provide long-term care for them?"

I have seniors coming to me every day, saying, "I cannot afford to keep my hydro on because I just don't have the ability to pay those bills." It saddens me to tell them that on May 1 they actually just incurred another 15% increase. Again, I believe my colleague from Nipissing said we're going to have another 10% in November and yet another 10% in January after that. That's 35% interest just in hydro, which we all have to have.

We talk about health care and schools. These hydro rates are going to have significant impacts on places like our hospitals, because if the hydro rate keeps going up there, they're on fixed income and they have to balance the budget, unlike the Ontario Liberal government that does not believe in balancing a budget. They keep purporting they will. Almost every agency out there suggests that that's probably not going to be the reality.

I really struggle with where they're going. The budget certainly didn't address a lot of the concerns that the people of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound talked to me about.

They did not reduce their addiction to overspending. Again, this budget, even after the last time we told them we can't support you spending more than you take in. No family, no individual, no company in my riding can spend more than they bring in each year and stay in business or stay in their home. You have to make the mortgage payment.

We had lots of reaction from industry, and I'm going to quote a couple of those. "The potential damage of the ORPP to youth employment must be a priority. This tax on jobs will hurt youth first, at a time when youth unemployment is already high...."

"While we applaud the government for being the first to make changes, there is limited benefit to our industry. Major brewers will still be able to gouge our members with higher-than-retail prices, with only low-volume licensees escaping their grip."

That was James Rilett, vice president of Restaurants Canada, a group well-known to us.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce: "The government has implemented or announced several new initiatives that will have a direct impact on business, including the introduction of a cap-and-trade system and the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

"The OCC calls on government to consider the negative impact that the ORPP could have on job creation, foreign direct investment, and the economy in general."

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business: "Instead of stimulating job creation and growth in small and medium-sized businesses, the province is hurting independent business owners and employees by moving forward with its pension plan, a disguised payroll tax."

Dr. Ved Tandan, president of the Ontario Medical Association: "The government's budget continues to drastically underfund health care—that's a problem for patients and it's a problem for doctors. There are 900,000 people in this province without a family doctor"—900,000 people—"and the population continues to grow and age—this budget ignores both that growth and that unmet need and that's unacceptable."

Finally, Donna Rubin, CEO, Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors: "Clearly, long-term care was far from a priority in this budget. It's particularly disheartening because this is by no means a new need. This is the same target recommended in the government-commissioned Sharkey report on long-term care in 2008, and that same report recommended that 4.0 hours of care be achieved by 2012. The target was right then, and it is right now, yet we are still not there."

A sad state of affairs, Mr. Speaker.

1600

The government likes to talk a fair game about government accountability, openness and transparency, but the fact that they never really embraced these tenets is why this administration is in the deep trouble it is today. The behemoth—again, \$11-billion or \$12-billion—deficit they racked up by wasting and overspending over the past 13 years has become an addiction.

This isn't a one-off. This continues to perpetually happen, and yet, miraculously, what they're going to tell us is that in two years they're going to solve all those ills and no one is going to lose in this. There aren't going to be any program changes; there's not going to be any less service at the front door; there's not going to be anybody losing jobs. Mr. Speaker, it's a bit of pixie dust at the very best.

They spent \$7 million on consultants who advised them that they were broke and they need to start selling public assets to keep afloat. How can they justify that to a person who can't find mental health and addiction services? How can they justify it to the people who come in to my office with children who need special services, and I have to tell them, "This government, the Liberals, will not be able to provide those because they spent \$7 million on consultants"?

Just even in my own critic role, again, we've had the rollout of SAMS. We were told in estimates committee that \$240 million would be the top dollar that would be spent; that would be the total. We're now at \$272 million and counting, and guess what, Mr. Speaker? They hired yet another consultant to tell them.

Last week, I stayed here on Friday to hear that report come out. They've admitted that it has been a failure, but still no recourse for the families. They have 19 recommendations. Well, recommendations don't pay the hydro bill. They don't put food on the table for those poor families who can't afford both of those necessities in life.

I'm not sure where they dreamed up half of this stuff. I'm not certain I trust. We've been asking them for a fully laid-out business plan of where this is going to work and how the numbers are all going to work. In my three years, we've asked for that on a number of projects and never received that, so I'm not certain that the people of Ontario are really going to buy it.

A number of my constituents are certainly not in support of the plan to liquidate Hydro One and send their hydro rates through the roof yet again. It should be noted here that legally today—the law was written that if you were to sell an asset such as Ontario Hydro, 100% of the money is supposed to go to pay off the debt of that asset. In this case, there is a \$27-billion debt, and they're going to take \$9 billion—what they're estimating for a sale price—and hive off \$4 billion to pay for transit.

Certainly transit is a huge issue and something that needs to happen here, but the law is the law, and they can't continue to break the law. At the end of the day, they need to abide by the laws of our province. They have four unprecedented investigations by the OPP into certain illicit behaviours that have been alleged against them, and yet here they are again—blatantly, in a budget document—breaking the law. It simply isn't acceptable.

I'm going to quote a resident, Michelle from Meaford in my riding: "I have yet to see evidence of any benefit for Ontario residents" in regard to the sale in that situation.

Kyle Hun from Hanover said, "The Liberals must undertake a consultative process and provide all of us with an opportunity to express our concerns." We've seen that with a number of issues in here, Mr. Speaker: that there has typically been very little, if any, consultation with the stakeholder. I certainly hope they're going to do that again, but I am not certain.

I received a call the other day from a fellow by the name of Al Diggins, of the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium, a good friend. One of his board members is Jim McCoubrey, who owns Troy Life. They install sprinklers across the country. They were very particular in their concern with changes that are going to impact manufacturers in the industry in regard to apprenticeship programs. They've reduced it from \$10,000 to \$5,000 and from four years to three years. They're saying, "How am I going to entice new apprentices into this business," when you're going in the opposite direction from where they believe, as an industry, it needs to be going? The



hikes that they're also concerned about in regard to hydro are going to leave them in the darkness.

Rate increases are also forcing cuts, as I've said earlier, in classrooms, hospitals and long-term-care homes. At the end of the day, there's only so much money. Salaries, benefits—all of those types of things which those people who work in those facilities deserve; they're hard-working, very caring individuals. You have to pay your utilities, and at the end of the day something has to give, because they, again, have to balance budgets—something a bit foreign to this government.

Some 60 families in my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound had their utilities disconnected in the fall of 2014 because they could not afford these Liberal energy rates. Your sale of Hydro One is doomed to drive rates a lot higher. So what is the Premier's advice to low-income families, frail seniors and public institutions who can't afford the rates anymore? Where exactly should they cut to make up the impact of their hydro increases?

Many, many years ago, when you were on the side of the Ontario public, your party leader said, "[Premier] Ernie Eves may be poised to sell off Hydro One in a desperate bid to get cash so he can throw money at the electricity crisis he has created." Who knew that only six years later that same Liberal leader would pour billions of dollars into misguided efforts to create an alternative or green energy industry in Ontario and, as a result, let rates soar so high that they forced some of Ontario's families to have their power turned off because of the unaffordability?

Let's not forget last week: General Motors is not stopping making cars; they're just stopping making them in Oshawa. I believe we also have a firm in eastern Ontario, Goodyear, that is leaving as well, 1,000 jobs in, I believe, my colleague Randy Hillier's riding, Lanark-Addington-Lennox—I can't get all of them. It's very sad, Mr. Speaker.

We continue to see money wasted, we continue to see overspending and we don't see them changing tack very much at all.

This afternoon, very interestingly, I introduced a private member's bill, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act with respect to third-party election advertising. It was interesting, as part of the notes I created there, that in the budget there is a section—by the way, I want to assure that this isn't just something Bill Walker has dreamt up. The Elections Ontario officer has asked for this in two reports. He sees it as a glaring concern to ensure that democracy is in fact respected here.

I have asked the government to put laws in place that will put a \$150,000 spending limit and \$3,000 per riding, and that anyone in non-compliance with that law, if it was to be enacted, would actually not be able to participate as a registered lobby group or third-party interest group in the next election. We have to ensure that it's a level and fair playing field.

I'm going to quote from the budget. This is their line: "Informed by the report of the Chief Electoral Officer, the province will also move to strengthen rules around

election-related, third-party advertising to protect the public interest." I'm challenging the Premier and her caucus members to actually vote for my bill to ensure there is fairness and that all people can participate in democracy in a fair way.

Interestingly, on the same page, page 223 of the 2015 Ontario budget, the government started to do things in regard to government advertising. What they suggest they're going to do—if you read their words, it doesn't really say this, but what it really means is that they're again taking ability away from the Auditor General to be a watchdog in regard to election advertising. They're going to tweak some words that allow them to bring someone from the community and purport how well the government is doing.

It's an abuse, in my opinion, and it shouldn't be something that should go through. It's something that I hope they will actually look at with true openness and accountability and respect of democracy in our great province, and vote for that budget bill at the end of the day—sorry, not the budget bill but my private member's bill.

This budget has continued to concern me in a number of ways. The Financial Administration Act makes it so that new accounting regulations cannot be imposed on Hydro One. How can this be in the spirit of accountability, openness and transparency? How can they think this going to allow the public to have greater trust in them? The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, schedule 13, exempts the ORPP Administration Corp. and Hydro One from freedom-of-information requests.

This government has doubled the entire debt of our great province in their 13-year reign of experiments and terror. They have a debt and a deficit level that are unprecedented, and yet they want to actually put in a pension plan, and they want people to believe, "You can trust us as the financial gurus of the country."

What they're failing to tell the good people of Ontario—they have kind of tried to use one-liners that say everyone deserves a pension. What they maybe should be is frank with the people and say when this pension will be payable. At very best guess it's probably 30 to 40 years down the road, and that is if they were to manage it properly.

I would suggest, too, that there is a lot of doubt in the community—certainly in my community of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound—that these folks can manage any kind of finances. At the end of the day, it will be yet another boondoggle. They're trying to build another revenue source for themselves so they can continue their addiction to their spending ways.

I want to go back to some of the things, in my last couple of minutes here, and just recount. We wanted to see a reduction in hydro rates. We wanted to see a reduction of debt. They spend \$11 billion on interest. That gets us nothing at the front line for our seniors, for low-income folks, for people on fixed incomes and certainly for people from Community Living, who again have come to

me almost in tears asking what is going to happen to their adult children when they pass on.

Our health care and our schools are going to be impacted, not to mention small businesses. Small businesses across my riding are suggesting, "You're going to add a payroll tax to me. You're going to add in the pension tax. You're going to add in cap-and-trade," or carbon, whatever tax you want to call it. They are at the end of their limit. How do we do this? Particularly the hydro rates that are going to double and triple again over the next four years—we've seen no ability for them to actually honestly step up and say, "We're going to stop over-spending. We know that we have to cap—"

1610

They have a fiscal plan, so they say, in this budget, but again, Vic Fedeli is very clear when he says they pulled that out of the air. There is no plan. They just pulled some numbers and want the great taxpayers and citizens of this province to believe that they are good managers of money. We all know that's not the fact; that's not certainly the case in their 12 or 13 years. At the end of the day, they have taken a lot of accountability, they've taken a lot of transparency, and the people of Ontario, I think at the end of this budget, are going to be worse off, which is hard to believe after last year's budget.

I started my remarks by saying it's Groundhog Day. The same old, same old: They're going to spend more, they're going to tax more, and at the end of the day, the people of Ontario are going to continue to pay through the nose for their inefficient and misguided direction.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm going to go back in the memory banks here to the 1990s. I was a city councillor in Stoney Creek at the time, and one of our councillors sat on the local hydro commission. It was Stoney Creek Hydro. I remember the days when my friends to the right deregulated hydro. It was the worst thing that ever happened to our city, Stoney Creek.

We also created all of the middlemen. We had the guys who would—transmission, storage and all these other things. Well, guess what, folks? In my last hydro bill that I got from Ontario Hydro, the transmission, storage and delivery was more than my usage. I never thought I would see the day, but that's where it's at now.

Is Hydro in trouble? It is in trouble. Did they have to do something? Yes, they had to do something; however, to put it in the hands of privatization is not a good thing because I saw that in the 1990s. We had all these middle companies step up to the plate, and these companies have been a disaster. Now, what these people are doing is handing it over again to the private sector—only a percentage, according to them, but that 60% will end up having the vote over the 40% eventually, and we'll end up with no say.

I'll tell you right now, folks, mark my words—you heard it here first: Hydro will not go down in costs. Expenses are going to go up in the private sector for us. We're going to pay probably the highest hydro rates in

North America by the time this fiasco is done. Give it five years; give it six years. You can go back to this speech and remember me saying this, because I said it in the 1990s when they did it, and look where we are. That's going to happen, trust me. I could say a lot more about this and I will later on if I ever get to speak to this. But I'll tell you right now, history is a good teacher, and obviously people are not paying attention to history.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this, to respond for a couple of minutes. The member opposite has referred to that famous American movie Groundhog Day. It's one of my favourites with Bill Murray, but in no way does this budget have anything to do with that movie.

The province of Ontario is at a transformational point in its history, a pivotal point in its history. We need to either go forward or go backwards, and this budget will move the province forward.

This doom and gloom that emanates from the opposite side really gets to be a bit much with time, but I don't have to speak on behalf of the budget. Let's hear what some other people have said about the budget. Let's hear from the mayor of Sault Ste. Marie, for example, who says, "Our roads need work, our aqueducts need work. We're all aware that our water infrastructure needs ... work. The budget was good news in that sense."

The CEO of CivicAction says, "Transportation is our lifeline and we got a series of much-needed infusions this week. This is great progress toward securing the investment we need."

It's not just us on this side of the House who are saying good things about the budget. How about the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, which "applauds the Ontario government for formalizing its commitment to a fully funded rapid transit project in Hamilton in the 2015 budget tabled today"?

Mr. Speaker, I could go on. Why not quote the Toronto Star in its editorial? "The plan put forward by the government promises almost \$50 billion for roads, bridges and highways in the greater Toronto and Hamilton region alone."

We can go forward. That's what this budget is all about.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Sarnia-Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to comment on the remarks from the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I thought Groundhog Day was required viewing for the Liberal caucus. That's what one of the members told me, that when you go there as a new member, that's the first thing they do: have you sit through it. You know the old movie The Candidate, with Robert Redford? Well, it's as required viewing for the Liberal caucus as Groundhog Day, because they know they're going to revisit, revisit and revisit a number of these things.

Anyway, I think the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound made a great rendition as he rhymed off a number



of the issues in his own riding, which every member should talk about. I know we have issues in my riding as well. The member from Newmarket–Aurora was quoting a number of those people who were applauding the budget. Just imagine, member, what we could do in this province if we had that \$11 billion in interest that we're paying every year to the bankers and the offshore people who lend money to this province. I think they're the only ones that really love this province because they're the ones that are getting money every month in debt payment.

The member also spoke about Oshawa, with GM and 1,000 jobs. That's just 1,000 jobs in Oshawa that are going to Lansing, Michigan. There are a number, probably four to five jobs for every one of those auto worker jobs, that would be auto-related that are probably going to disappear as well—Goodyear rubber, further east.

We talked about third-party spending. I certainly applaud the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound with his private member's bill. Finally we might see something in this province. There's a guy with vision. I would urge this government, and the third party as well, to support that bill. Let's do something about this third-party spending, because it certainly is—I won't say. There's a word I would say, but I don't say it here. But it certainly needs to be changed. You all know what that word is, ladies and gentlemen out there. You know that word, what this spending has done to this province. Someday, I'd like to do an hour on that. I could speak for an hour on the—

**Interjection:** Heifer dust.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Heifer dust—that's what my great friend Ernie Hardeman said about what that spending has done to this province.

We talked about the ORPP—okay. I guess I'm out of time, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I guess, still with the movie theme, we're talking about Groundhog Day. I want to tell you about a movie I saw on the weekend. It's called I'll Be Me, and it's the Glen Campbell story. It was a fundraiser for the Alzheimer Society. I highly recommend to anyone in the House who has the opportunity to go and watch this documentary on the life of Glen Campbell, a very famous singer, of course, and his battle with Alzheimer's. It's documenting his last tour and it shows how Alzheimer's has affected his memory and his life. As we know, because we've all introduced petitions in this House, there's no known cause or cure for Alzheimer's. It will be \$15.7 billion in the total economic burden by 2020—not that far away, Speaker. I know there is \$2 million in the budget for the brain injury centre in Ottawa. We have to do more research into this disease.

Just by way of wrapping up, let me also say that over the weekend I had the opportunity yesterday to attend the celebration of the back-to-back national championships won by the Windsor Express, the National Basketball League of Canada champions. It was a nasty final. The

Halifax team got into a brawl on the floor before the game. In the morning of the game, punches were thrown. The team left. Their coach has been banned for life and fined heavily. Their assistant coach has been banned for life and fined heavily. Some of their players have been fined. But they left town. They forfeited the game. It's not the way we wanted to win, but we did win back-to-back championships. I look forward to the next season, especially if these two teams meet again.

Thank you for your time.

**1620**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek for his comments, and certainly my good friend from Windsor–Tecumseh and all the work he does down there.

I'm going to focus a little bit more on the member for Newmarket–Aurora. He said a couple of things there. He talked about Groundhog Day and how he didn't think there were any of the same things in this budget. But we saw a deficit, we saw more taxes and we saw more spending than revenue, which has been indicative of the three years that I've been here. So I would suggest to you that there are a lot of things that have repeated themselves.

He also suggested that there are municipalities out there that need roadwork and water and sewers. I find that very interesting, because I brought a letter to this House, to their government. Owen Sound this year experienced huge freezing of their water pipes. Their infrastructure is in a real mess. What they basically said was, "No, no, no. Tough luck. Take it out of the reserves." Well, they don't have reserves like a government like this that can just dig in and continually ask for more.

You know, it was interesting. They came out and found money—I think gift cards, actually—when the ice storm happened here in downtown Toronto. That was created by cold weather. But yet when you ask for Owen Sound, they say, "Oh, no, no. That's a whole different story. You go back and do it yourself."

I also want to bring up the winter maintenance. That certainly has been coming up in the House here a bit across a lot of municipalities. It's interesting that this government—sadly, I don't see the person here today who probably wants to answer to these. But the winter maintenance program that a lot of municipalities are asking about—they put dollars to make themselves look better over the safety of the residents of Ontario. This budget should have addressed that as well.

My good friend from Sarnia–Lambton, an exceptional member in this House, talked about required viewing of the Groundhog Day movie. I think they absolutely have watched it, Bob Bailey. I think two things have happened. I think, one, there's a mountain of debt, so there's always a shadow forecasted over them. The other is that they're digging that hole so deep with their debt that they can't see the sunshine there either. So every time they do

watch Groundhog Day, it is a snowstorm. It is a definite winter snow job that this government is trying to pull over the people of Ontario.

This budget is yet again—it's Groundhog Day. "It's rosy, it's wonderful, it's good. Just trust us; we're all fine."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** As always, it's a pleasure to stand in this House on behalf of the residents and citizens of Kitchener–Waterloo, to bring their concerns to this place and also to raise some concerns with regard to the budget that was presented last week.

I've been trying to think of a different title for this. It's called Building Ontario Up, and I think that is a contradiction in and of itself, because there are measures contained within this budget that will have a long-standing negative effect on the economy of this province, on the people of this province, and ultimately on the social fabric that all of us, I think, care about.

Because the major thrust of it obviously is built around privatizing a strategic public asset in Hydro One, a lot of my comments are going to be focused around why that decision is the wrong decision. I certainly hope that the government side is listening, because I'm going to challenge the math on that deal.

I'm also going to be talking, of course, about the ORPP Administration Corp. and the concerns that we have around how the government is moving forward in potentially creating a private-public pension fund, which is not what they promised, obviously, in the last platform.

I'm going to be talking about the Taxation Act and some of the cuts to the tax credits, which will have a negative impact on some of the things that are actually going well in the province of Ontario. It shouldn't all be about negativity; it should be about trying to find some consensus.

The major thrust, though, that I have to bring to this discussion is the feedback I have received around the sale of Hydro One. I know our leader, Andrea Horwath, was in Kingston this last weekend and travelling around southeastern Ontario. I think the feedback that she got is that a lot of people did not know the full impact of this decision, if they knew that it was going to be happening. I think there is a responsibility that we all share to ensure that people have the right information going forward.

Certainly with Bill 91, the main thrust, as I said, focuses on treating Hydro One and its subsidiaries as non-public entities. The implications of this, I'm going to get into in a little bit. But I think one of the major problems for us as New Democrats is that the decision to sell Hydro One will have long-standing impacts on the revenues that the province brings in from that public asset. It will obviously affect the reliability of service. If we can learn anything from the past, the decision to sell off the 407 has had a drastic impact. It still resonates with people each and every day. When they drive it and they get their bill, it obviously is a tangible thing that connects—they often say that an enraged electorate is an engaged elector-

ate. I'm sure there are a lot of people on the 407 who are avoiding the infrastructure deficit in the province of Ontario. That is an issue; there's no doubt about it. But to have the government stand up, day in and day out, and say, "We're going to do something about this" after 13 years of being in this place is a bit of a slap.

We are definitely concerned with why the sale of Hydro One is being accelerated. It is being accelerated. There are some schedules in this bill which actually fast-track the lack of oversight over Hydro One even before it is sold.

I think I'm going to that one first. I'm going to take on this growing trend by the government to remove oversight. I understand sometimes why they're so concerned about that increased scrutiny and oversight into these public institutions and public assets. One has only to look at the Auditor General's reports that have come forward, from the last AG and this current AG, on the way infrastructure is funded—she has raised some serious concerns; you may not like it; those concerns are shared by a lot of people in this province—and the AG report most recently on road maintenance.

The role that independent officers of this Legislature play in exposing inconsistencies and, quite honestly, sometimes incompetencies of the government of the day, regardless of who it is, is so important. I think the fact that this budget has schedules which accelerate the lack of oversight—there's no other way to put it. The moment even one single share of Hydro One is sold, Hydro One will not be deemed an agency of the crown any longer, and schedule 3 strips the Auditor General of powers. No more value-for-money audits over there. We will not have that oversight, as individual legislators, nor will the people of this province.

Schedule 10 cuts out the Financial Accountability Officer after six months. It really is unfortunate. We just finally got the FAO hired. He's just got nicely settled, and he's also been told to move already. We just got him here. The first budget, after two months—he's only been here for two months. In the first budget, the government removes his oversight over Hydro One. That's schedule 10.

In schedule 11, the Financial Administration Act is amended to limit our ability to obtain any information on Hydro One. So even though the government says, "We're not privatizing; we're still going to have a majority of the shares," we are essentially losing complete control of this public asset. What's happening here is really the wholesale stripping of access to any information about an asset that the people, currently, are the largest shareholder of. That is not being open; that is not being transparent.

It's so strategic. We see it so blatantly, so openly, that this government is running away from accountability and oversight. Once Bill 91 gets royal assent, those changes are effectively happening, and not even when the IPO comes into effect. It is shocking.

There's a little bit of a ripple effect, actually, out in the province of Ontario. My own local hydro, Waterloo North Hydro, is having its AGM this upcoming week. Through



the grapevine, we've heard stories that they've got this new proposal to modernize. Any time I hear that word now, I think somehow the people of this province are going to lose, and that's definitely a concern for us in Waterloo. But the government has been actively suggesting, and perhaps providing taxable incentives for local hydros to sell off. Those municipalities rely so heavily on that revenue.

It was also disturbing, the way that the whole—the lock-up was most unfortunate, the lock-up on beer and the sell-off of Hydro One. We've never seen anything like that, and we've never been locked up over a banker's report. It just has never happened. It was not even commercially sensitive; they had leaked most of it already, prior to it.

1630

But certainly that day, there was this very shiny bauble over here of beer and this big, big issue of selling off Hydro One. I think my local paper actually summed it up very nicely. I just want to share the editorial from that day. It said, "Beware of Ontario Liberals who tinker with the marketing of beer while selling off most of the province's energy transmission system. And beware, especially, when they announce both initiatives on the same day."

"In what could be described as not just a smokescreen but a suds screen"—which is quite witty, I hope you will agree—"Premier Kathleen Wynne last Thursday trumpeted her plan to let selected grocery stores sell six-packs of beer—though never more cheaply than the Beer Store. To a large extent, this was a sideshow, an intentional distraction to the Liberals' real agenda."

"As beer lovers gleefully shouted 'Hallelujah,' too little attention was paid to the day's truly revolutionary change—the impending sale into private hands of 60% of Hydro One. Lots of people like beer. But everybody needs electricity."

I think they pretty much nailed it there. It's a beautiful thing in the province of Ontario when people see through a suds screen, like what happened on that day.

They have also raised the same concerns as we did. There's nothing to stop the private investors, who will collectively own most of Hydro One, from joining forces and ganging up on the government. In fact, that was probably one of the biggest issues that we raised in our financial briefing: The bill, as it's crafted, does not protect the government or the taxpayer from collusion. So you are leaving the door open to full privatization. I hope that it's not with full intention, I hope that it's just a little glitch, but you can't blame us for raising that red flag.

This editorial goes on to say, "Let's not delude ourselves. The driving force behind this sell-off is not the Liberals' desire for a better transmission system. It is, instead, this debt-strapped government's hunger for money." I think they've nailed that. As I said, it's good to see that folks really got it.

What is also very surprising is that there's this premise that the Premier sort of brings to this House every day during question period: "People knew we were going to sell off Hydro One." People did not know that you were

going to do this. They have not had an opportunity to voice their concerns over this proposal. They did not know that you would get to the point of such desperation that you would be willing to sell off a strategic public asset, a quick cash settlement for purely political purposes. They did not get that, and I hope that you will understand that.

There are certainly some other media sources, obviously, who have accurately summarized what will happen. This is from James Laxer: "Not only will the sell-off draw in the funds to pay off the utility's debt, it will bring in the capital to underwrite much needed investments in public transit in the province, according to Ms. Wynne."

"In truth, the big losers will be Ontarians. They will be reduced from owners of the system to its tenants and they will pay out extra billions to the new owners over the decades to come."

How can you not see this? I mean, I am friends with some of you on that side of the aisle. I have great respect for some of you on that side of the aisle. I understand that you are in a fiscally challenging position, and I also understand that by many of the decisions you have made, you have put yourself there. But there is no good reason to sell off this asset, and you do not have a mandate to do so.

It is a disturbing trend. It's a disturbing trend around short-sighted fiscal decisions which seem great at the time, but have long-term negative impacts. We've seen this on several privatization experiments, if I can put it that way, in health care, in the IT sector, in the contracting out of labs results. We've seen it in road maintenance. We have the proof; we have the evidence, Mr. Speaker. It is here. It is unfathomable that a government like the Liberals, who are well into this majority government and who have—in year one of a four-year mandate, this is the time to be courageous. It is not an act of courage to sell off a public asset which generates so much income.

Mr. Laxer goes on to make the point that keeping hydro public is such a pivotal part of our history as a province. He actually mentions Mr. Adam Beck. He says: "Selling 60% of Hydro One stands this historic model on its head. Yes, the province will gain a one-time hit from the sale. But the new owners will make returns on their investment that are far in excess of the cost to the province if it chose instead to borrow to invest in public transit. Bay Street and private investors, not to be confused with philanthropists, are already jumping up and down at the prospect of tapping into an assured profit stream going on into the indefinite future. And, of course, consumers will pay more for their power."

This is the one thing that we know for a fact: The Premier and Mr. Clark have not been able to make any guarantees around rates going up. They have not been able to do that. We've seen from the history of the deregulation and privatization, which was started by the PC caucus just over a decade ago, that energy costs, the costs of hydro, have tripled, because when profit drives the agenda, profit wins—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Look at the 407 costs.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The 407, yes—and people lose, Mr. Speaker.

We are certainly in a place in our history where we should not be making short-sighted decisions like this. The government should know better. What we've seen, as well, is that, aside from the lost revenue—and I want to challenge the government on some of their assumptions around where they're going to get the money from. I also want to remind people that Hydro One is a very profitable company.

It was really interesting that Mr. Clark challenged the premise that governments are not in a position to self-finance infrastructure. The interest rates right now in the province of Ontario are at a historic low. Governments can borrow money at as low as 3%. It's not like they can pick up and leave—although I've joked that I've seen some of the members across the row who would like to pick up and leave. But the fact of the matter is that Mr. Clark's assumptions were wrong on that.

I also want to point out the fact that the estimated sale value of Hydro One right now is estimated at \$16 billion, but Hydro One earns a net income of about \$800 million a year. That's a return on investment of 5%. That's pretty good.

Meanwhile, interest rates have fallen to next to zero. A benchmark 10-year Canadian government bond has a current yield of less than 1.4%. The government's return on its Hydro One assets has been getting bigger since 2009. This is an asset that is actually improving on the revenue side of the House for the government. This is something that's actually working. And yet, this government seems determined to shut the door on something that is actually benefiting the people of this province and bringing much-needed revenue into Queen's Park.

As I mentioned, the return on Hydro One assets has been getting bigger since 2009, corresponding with a decrease in borrowing costs. If debt interest versus lost income is the question, then every year it makes less sense to sell Hydro One, not more. Follow the money on this. This is not about ideology; this is about a revenue stream that is coming into the province's coffers that is reliable, that is consistent.

There's one other thing that I want to challenge. Mr. Clark's report also has a questionable claim that this sale will result in private sector discipline, which will deliver huge benefits for the government and consumers. I have to challenge that. There is no precedent for that at all—except that elsewhere in the report, Clark is reassuring us that the government isn't really giving up control, despite only retaining a 40% stake. If the other stakeholders have 60% and the government has 40%, the last time I checked, that is not a majority of control.

In other words, Clark thinks government discipline will prevail at Hydro One. He does. He thinks discipline will be the overarching factor that's driving the so-called innovation and profits of Hydro One. The only thing that is going to actually drive the way that policy is created at

Hydro One is profit. That's what the shareholders want. Then, the people in this province come second.

1640

Aside from the beer-and-Hydro One show that came out, and the fact that obviously this government is committed to going through with this—and what a lack of consultation on the Hydro One deal. Long-standing Liberals have called. I had this one conversation with an 87-year-old on Friday, because I do consti calls. I call them up because they've called the office—especially seniors, because they know. They've seen the evolution of public power. They know. One fellow told me that when it first started, he was paying one cent a kilowatt. That's how old this fellow was. But for the first time, this 87-year-old constituent has come down to my office, he has the petition, and he's going around his apartment complex and getting signatures, urging this government not to sell Hydro One. As I said, an enraged electorate is often an engaged electorate. It shouldn't take that, but we do have people in this province who fully understand what is at risk.

It doesn't make sense that this Premier is so committed to doubling down on a gamble that has proven in other sectors and in our own province's history not to pay off. We are losing oversight. We are losing an important and consistent revenue stream. Our rates will go up—and we have the highest rates, obviously, in the country. This will have a negative impact on the manufacturing sector, who have long been lobbying for an industrial energy rate so that they can improve their productivity, so that they can hire more people, so that they can actually stay in the province and not pick up and leave. And yet, what are they having? This is so evident to so many people. One has to wonder who will win. If it's just about politics, then it's a sad day in the history of this province. The high rates, the reliability and the loss of revenue: Those are sound arguments not to sell off Hydro One; they truly are.

There are so many other people who have weighed in on Hydro One, and I do feel it's necessary to put it on the record, because I think they're committed to going forward with it. I think that the decision has already been made. I think that they have already made the commitment of the funds, and we've actually seen that with the power workers. The funding is supposed to be dedicated for infrastructure, and yet there's no mechanism in this budget to ensure or guarantee that that money will actually go to transit and infrastructure. It's not there. If they were truly committed to making sure it got to the Trillium Trust, then it would be there, but it's not—just like they have not protected around collusion around the shareholders in the membership.

This is from Sheila Block; I read her often. She goes on to say this plan obviously “includes fully privatizing part of Hydro One and selling off a majority stake in what remains.

“The government is trying to position this sale as an ‘asset swap’....”



We are challenging that assumption. This is not an asset swap, because you have already proven that you're not fully dedicated to selling off Hydro One for infrastructure, because you've already used the proposed money that you don't even have yet to settle a collective agreement with a union. That has to be challenged—but in doing so, the government is ignoring its own previous expert advice.

This is another thing: I love the fact that the Liberal government have these special committees, they have these round tables, they commission these select committees on everything from mental health to infrastructure, but the previous expert advice—one was from Metrolinx and one was by Anne Golden—none of those reports ever suggested selling off vital public assets.

This government had to go and find a special individual who would do his so-called pro bono work to give them a report that told them to do what they already wanted to do in the first place. That's essentially what happened here. Mr. Clark said that he was working pro bono. We found out that they spent \$7 million on consultant reports. It's incredible. To your friends and your family—it's the friends and family program here at Queen's Park. If you can get in, you're good to go. You've just got to generate a report that the Liberals want to hear, that they want to pay attention to. What a shame that that happened. We had to FOI that in the interest of transparency and accountability. We did so, but we wanted to see the actual reports. We wanted to see what the consultant said because the taxpayers paid for it. We've never seen the details. I think there were eight individual consulting firms that were paid a good sum of money to do some sort of analysis around the sale of Hydro One and six-packs of beer in a Walmart store. We, to date, have not seen any of that.

Back to Sheila Block and the five major reasons why you should not privatize Hydro One: "Privatization would be a bonanza for Bay Street but bad news for Main Street." So far, if you follow the money, there are going to be certain people who have already benefited, actually—the \$7 million.

The second is, "The province's finances will suffer if it privatizes Hydro One." I've already sort of made that case, I think, as have others.

The third reason: "A review of similar privatization schemes in Canada and internationally suggests that privatizing Hydro One will very likely increase rates." I don't think anybody is challenging that. "Nova Scotia, which privatized its electricity system a generation ago, now has the highest electricity prices in Canada. We know that a private operator will likely borrow money to pay for the purchase and, later, pass that cost on to customers. Because a private corporation is profit-oriented, it won't discriminate between high-income and low-income hydro consumers—everyone will pay more while receiving fewer public services because of lost revenues to Ontario." That pretty much sums it up; it really does.

There's this premise that Mr. Clark sort of drums up that privatizing part of Hydro One will increase innova-

tion. I strongly challenge that premise and so does Sheila Block. She says, "Innovation will suffer. Ontario Hydro has been used with modest success as a public policy tool to promote industrial development, to cushion the impact of rising rates on consumers, and to green our economy. For example, in recent years Hydro One has been directed by government to prioritize the infrastructure investments required to enable renewable electricity sources. A profit-driven ... entity would not have made these green choices when other infrastructure investments would have offered higher return on investment." Profit will be the driver of policy. That will happen. That has happened already in the history of this province.

Then, of course: "Ontario's track record with partial privatizations doesn't inspire confidence." I should not have to stand in this House and remind this government that the "eHealth scandal resulted in \$16 million of untendered contracts going to consultants, along with extravagant pay hikes and bonuses. The Ornge ambulance scandal was accompanied by enormous salaries, corruption, and failures in delivering vital public services."

Instead of actually taking a stand in this first year of a four-year mandate, the Premier has chosen to make a serious policy decision with long-term consequences and short-term gain. It is genuinely surprising to people, it really is.

I am thinking back during the election when the Premier visited Walkerton, for instance. She did a political tour and stood up in Walkerton and talked about the risks of excessive privatization without the appropriate levels of oversight and accountability.

She went there and it was a political hit. Some people criticized her for doing so, and yet she's living this today as the Premier of this province because she was the transportation minister for a long time and she started the whole process of the privatization of road maintenance. So when we got this Auditor General's report last week and we found out that there is a lack of oversight on this important public service—it is Canada. The businesses that secured the contracts from this government should have the proper equipment to clean a road of salt and snow. They should have the appropriate skill set. What did they find? They said that "the procurement process did not adequately factor in contractors' ability to deliver required services." They found that procuring the lowest bid and contractor can cost more in the long run—this is a recurring theme here at Queen's Park. We found that the audit targets were not being met. We found that there was overreliance on contractors self-reporting their performance—self-reporting: "Yes, I'm doing a very good job today. Thank you very much."

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Contractors supervising contractors.

1650

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Yes. Maybe we need a road maintenance ombudsman, Mr. Speaker. We've got a beer ombudsman. I was in Niagara this week and some of the people were saying, "When are we going to get a white wine ombudsman?"

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** You like that, Steve.

The lack of oversight is a completely emerging trend. It is becoming the new norm here. This government can introduce a bill called openness, accountability and transparency, and yet the Financial Accountability Officer has been here for two and a half months, and already they've written him out of major oversight. Obviously, we have grave concerns about this.

Just on that same theme, I've had the privilege, really, of asking the Premier directly about the changes around advertising here at Queen's Park. Once again, these concerns come from the Auditor General. She came out specifically—I mean, the day that she raised the road maintenance report, thankfully, she also said there is a section in the budget which changes the definition of "partisan." How partisan of you to change the definition of "partisan." The Queen's Park briefing actually did a really good job of doing an overview, and they quoted the AG; but at the end of the day, these changes step over the bounds of what is reasonable for her as an independent officer of this Legislature.

She goes on to say that the changes to government advertising rules in the budget implementation bill could allow taxpayer dollars to fund partisan advertising and turn the Auditor General's office into a rubber stamp. This is what Bonnie Lysyk says: "The government could flood the province with self-congratulatory and self-promotional advertising that would be of little practical use to the citizens paying for it," she said at Queen's Park last Wednesday, where she was releasing this report. "Equally significant, these amendments would transform the role of the Auditor General into that of a rubber stamp because they would oblige us to approve an ad submitted to us as being in compliance with the amended requirements even though, in our opinion, it was clearly partisan." The current rules have been in place since 2004 and were particularly aimed at stopping the kind of taxpayer-funded advertising that took place under the former Premier.

The Government Advertising Act now prohibits certain aspects, like ads that include the name, voice or image of a member of the executive council or a member of the assembly, and the proposed rules keep the restrictions on using the name, voice or image of an MPP, so that is still in place. However, the language around fostering a positive impression of the governing party or promoting the partisan political interest of the governing party is taken out.

Well, isn't that convenient? This morning I asked them if they're changing these rules to sell the sell-off of Hydro One, because, as I mentioned, so few people actually know how drastic this plan is, but they may be hearing it very quickly from this government in their own ads, which now the Auditor General is not going to have oversight of.

She goes on to say that if the budget is passed unchanged, she will recommend her office no longer review government ads and the responsibility be placed with the

ministry instead. So basically she's saying, "I'm not interested in rubber-stamping partisan ads." She has said that. She has raised this concern with the government.

Of course, that day the Treasury Board president was responding. She said that the amendments are necessary because the Auditor General was rejecting too many ads that should have been legitimate. In the opinion of the Liberal Treasury Board president, she wasn't able to get her ads through the Auditor General, which is really interesting, because the AG's office said that it only rejected less than 1% of 7,200 ads. So that 1% caused this massive change around oversight around partisanship in advertising from the government. You can't stand up in the House and say you're truly committed to accountability and transparency and, at the same time, be changing the rules of engagement for advertising in the province of Ontario.

Ironically, the ads that were turned down by this government were actually not reviewed by this AG. So they don't want to hear it. There are new rules of engagement here at Queen's Park, and I just want to say publicly, because you haven't heard it that much, but I just want to thank the Auditor General and encourage her to keep up the good work. She certainly is keeping us busy on this side of the House.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Regardless of the frontal attacks on her.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Yes, and even though all of these systems are very complex, she's doing a really good job. I was so disappointed the day that the AG report came out and the Minister of Energy said, "Well, these are complex." This particular Auditor General—she was running Manitoba Hydro for a number of years, so I don't think it was too complex.

That's what I want to say on Hydro One: It's a bad decision; it doesn't make financial sense; you haven't got a mandate to sell it; and we're going to be paying for a long time. I know that there are people on that side of the House who must share the concerns.

There are other ways to generate revenue for infrastructure. We have some creative ideas. We have some long-standing ideas. You actually have the tools within your own toolkit to actually generate the funding. As I said, there has never been a better time, actually, to self-fund these projects.

The important thing around the ORPP Administration Corp. is that it's hard to get to a lot of the substance of what's going to be happening with this, because most of the changes are going to reside in regulations, which, of course, has also been a long-standing issue for us. It does remove the possible changes from the House, because we can't find out exactly what you're going to be doing with it.

But you did have one section in the budget where you were putting out an RFP; it said the government is going to put out an RFP to a third-party corporation or organization to manage this. Obviously, we have some concerns around that. Namely, of course, that the corporation will not be subject to the Corporations Information Act and



so, therefore, not required to file information about directors and officers for public purposes. Imagine establishing a public pension plan with private oversight and excluding the people of this province from knowing who those people are.

Section 35 states that the corporation and its agents may be paid from the pension fund for administering and investing the fund, including for services provided before the pension plan is established. So people are going to get paid even before the fund is established. We also learned in the financial briefing that they'll get to set their own remuneration—and nobody shakes their head at this. I would encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to actually have a look at that.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** They'll probably set their own management contracts with their severance packages as well.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Severance packages, yes. The concern about this is that if you look at other jurisdictions that have adopted this model and you tie performance to their salary and bonuses, some of the highest-paid public servants in BC come from the board and the managers of the board who are actually managing the fund.

So if you're going to establish a public pension plan, do it right the first time. Make it a true not-for-profit and ensure that any profit that is made through dividends actually go back into the fund. I mean, this is not an overly complicated thing.

When you look at the ORPP as well, there are a number of things that certainly raise our eyebrows, of course. As I mentioned, the exclusion from the Corporations Information Act and the fact that agents can be paid even before the fund is set up are concerns. Then, of course, there's the Trillium Trust Act. This is schedule 44. The Trillium Trust Act excludes Hydro One and its subsidiaries. If Hydro One sells a qualifying asset, the proceeds do not have to be transferred to the Consolidated Revenue Fund to then be paid to the Trillium Trust. There's no guarantee that this money is actually going to get into the Trillium Trust. They have not guaranteed that that is going to happen.

1700

There is no provision in Bill 91 prescribing Hydro One's shares as qualifying assets. Bill 91 does not require that Hydro One proceeds, or any revenue from the asset optimization program, go into the Trillium Trust. As I mentioned, once this bill gets royal assent, there are new rules of engagement that are put into place.

There are a couple of other issues under the Taxation Act that I have to raise today, Mr. Speaker, because I think they caught several of our key stakeholders by surprise—I mentioned this last week, when I was talking about the budget motion.

The tax credits that are being changed, in particular for the Ontario film industry, have truly sent a shock wave through the entertainment industry here in Toronto. You have to understand that some of these productions are mid-phase. They have already set up, they have already booked their sites, they have already hired a huge number

of people with varying skill sets, all the way up and down. I think that people don't even understand how complex these industries are.

When they found out that there's a reduction in the tax credits, it totally blindsided this industry. They have said on various occasions that this is the difference between picking up productions and moving. They can do that quite easily, especially if they can make the financial case for it, because they had no idea that these tax credits were going to be altered in such a drastic way.

The other issue that I think caught all of us by surprise—we heard pre-budget that there were going to be some great incentives around apprenticeships. There's \$23 million listed in the budget for apprenticeships this year. However, Mr. Speaker, they're reducing the tax credit for the industry. So you're encouraging people to enter into apprenticeship opportunities, but then you're shutting the door on their opportunity to actually access that information. It makes so little sense. It's a little bit like—it's contradictory. I was trying to think of that Kris Kristofferson song about a walking contradiction. That's what has been running in my mind.

We've heard definitions of what "progressive" is. We certainly heard a lot about progressive budgets during the election. There isn't anything progressive about this budget, Mr. Speaker, when the entire premise is short-term, poorly-thought-out financial decisions that have a negative impact on future generations. I have to say that it's disappointing, because there are smart places to invest.

Certainly, education is one of the ways. That's how I got involved in politics. For me, public education is always worth fighting for, and there have been some big fights on education in the history of this province. I think that people feel strongly about it; they're very passionate about it. I think there's going to be a lot of people on the front lawn tomorrow who have something to say about the new physical and health curriculum. It does drum up a very emotional response, right?

I'm partly here today because of when this government brought in Bill 115 and squashed collective bargaining rights for teachers in the province of Ontario. I think it's safe to say that even though they brought in Bill 122 to sort of mitigate some of the negativity of Bill 115, there's definitely a Bill 115 hangover in the province of Ontario right now, and you're seeing it play itself out. Those local bargaining conversations are so frustrating, because there's a definite lack of leadership at the provincial level. That has always been a challenge for school boards, especially with the centralized power around education that the Liberals have embraced here at Queen's Park. Although they say they respect school boards, sometimes it's pretty hard to see that respect play itself out.

When you look at the overall budget, there are little bits and pieces—really small pieces that work towards making some stakeholders happy and then there are these big, poorly-thought-out policies, as I said, though, on the employment side of the revenue stream, which is really

missing. That's why the tax credit reduction, the Apprenticeship Tax Credit reduction and the youth employment strategy reduction of \$245 million—they're nickel-and-diming these industries, who actually have a very strong record of creating jobs in the province, particularly the Ontario film industry for Toronto.

On the employment stats, there were 27,500 full-time jobs lost last month. In total, there have been 317,500 manufacturing jobs lost since 2000. The government has admitted that they overestimated job creation in budget 2014 by 67,000 jobs, so you have to go back and look at the math on that. What is happening? Why were those jobs not created? Ironically, you have to go back to the cost of energy, which is again—you go full circle. Selling off Hydro One makes no sense.

If you gather up all of the cuts to the other programs—and I think it actually was the speaker last year who pointed out the fact that, on page 244 of last year's budget, there were 6% cuts in every ministry except for education, health care, justice and community and social services, and yet this government found a way to go through the back door and reduce expenditures in those ministries.

In the ministries where we know that smart investment actually would save money, like in workplace health and safety, for instance, we saw a 6% cut in the six agencies that are charged with training, protecting and ensuring that people, for instance, have their qualifications on working at heights training so that injuries are avoided. That's a smart place to invest. It's prevention; it's intervention.

There's nothing in this budget, for instance, on conservation. If you want to actually create jobs, you should have a renovation tax credit, which inspires local—which is very—what's the word I'm looking for? It inspires local investment in the local economy, so it gets those local tradespeople working in homes. People are inspired to actually invest in the local economy by updating their own homes or businesses to make—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** And hiring some apprentices.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Actually yes, hiring some apprentices instead of pulling out the tax credit. It has the added effect of pushing that underground economy up into the light. The benefit about that is that consumers are better protected and the government gets the revenue. It's a win-win-win-win. It's completely the opposite thinking that surrounds the idea of selling off Hydro One.

The \$3.2-billion cuts to other programs which are predicted to happen over the next three years: These are going to be devastating cuts. When you're holding the line, for instance, on the hospital budget and those costs at that hospital continue to rise, you have to admit that that actually is a cut. Because community supports have also been whittled away, the not-for-profit organizations which are really just holding the line on the social fabric or the social net that we have championed for so many years and that I think perhaps inspired a lot of us to get involved in politics—that net is frayed. It is seriously frayed. Those not-for-profit agencies have seen their

operating grants reduced. They've, of course, had to invest in proving to the government that they're helping people.

**1710**

Really, you can see in all of our communities across this province especially the lack of strategy around seniors, and I think a colleague mentioned it. Not having a comprehensive strategy around dementia and aging by not investing in some known policies and programs that have proven to make a difference—and we have that evidence. We should have, because it's 2015, and the tsunami of aging Ontarians is here. We don't have to talk about it coming anymore; it's actually happening in our communities. If you actually had those investments in place in your communities, then they wouldn't have to go to the emergency room. So there's a very compelling economic argument for strategic investment, which is actually more compassionate and is obviously in keeping with why a lot of us are here.

But when you look at the cuts, budget 2012 had \$1.6 billion; budget 2013, \$2.14 billion; budget 2014, \$1.58 billion; budget 2015, \$1.94 billion. The reason I raise these cuts is that, in total, that's \$5.8 billion. So the Liberals are really beating Mr. Harper on the cuts by a million cuts—\$5.8 billion in cuts.

**Interjection:** Oh, come on.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I know you really don't like it when I mention Stephen Harper, but I don't think that they like it either.

The point is that you don't cut your way back to prosperity. It doesn't work. Other jurisdictions have tried it, and it has not worked. Cutting almost \$90 million in successful tax credits for the cultural industries, cutting \$95 million from tax credits to support apprenticeships: This is not good news for the economy. It really isn't.

Certainly, as I mentioned, there's the hospital funding. This is the fourth straight year. Hospitals come here and they lobby—the presidents, the managers, the LHINs, the CCACs. I mean, really, when you look at the entire health care portfolio, it's a challenge to see how we're going to take care of the people in this province. It's not sustainable. I'm actually at a loss of words.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Sixteen hundred people not getting their care in Niagara because of the strike, because of the for-profit.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** People are out on strike. They're just fighting for, like, a 1% increase because they've been frozen for four years. Yet you see these public sector CEO salaries continue to go up, unabated.

It really does come down to two priorities, I think, for us in the province of Ontario. As mentioned, there's Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy, which we fought for in the minority government, which I look back to with great fondness. I really did enjoy actually being part of a minority government. I know the government didn't like it that much, but we were able to bring some really creative ideas to the budget process. I know the PCs decided just to sit out the entire event for various budgets—

*Interjections.*



**Ms. Catherine Fife:** There seems to be a lot going on here, Mr. Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I can't hear the member for Kitchener–Waterloo, and I need to be able to hear the member for Kitchener–Waterloo. I would ask the members who are engaged in private conversations to reduce the noise level so that we can all hear each other.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's very kind of you.

So here we are, and it all comes back to where this government is acting on priorities. Their priorities very clearly are keeping certain stakeholders very happy, which is why I think they are selling Hydro One, because everybody in this House understands that, from a financial perspective, it is actually not making sense. It is hard to imagine, really, especially after attending this P3 session earlier today with my colleagues, how the \$130 billion is actually going to be sustainable, because when you sell off Hydro One for a quick cash grab, you're actually shutting down a major revenue stream for future infrastructure and transit investment. That is a fact.

Ultimately, we clearly see on this side of the House that the people of this province are going to pay the price for those decisions. This came up in the P3 panel earlier this morning, that there are few files that are more political than transportation. I think we all have examples of that. Certainly, decisions and promises are sort of moving targets in this province, I'd have to say.

Selling off Hydro One for \$4 billion, which would only pay for half of the Toronto relief line, is incredibly short-sighted. Losing \$800 million a year in annual revenue is like burning the furniture to heat the house. It doesn't make any sense, and certainly we should know better from the past.

When I think of what we've gone through in Kitchener–Waterloo over the years—this budget actually has Highway 7 in it. It's the eighth year in a row that Highway 7 has been listed as an upcoming project.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Starting construction this year.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's better late than never. It is true that it's coming.

Then, of course, there was the LRT. The LRT construction is starting in Waterloo, as well. It was originally promised that the government was going to pay for \$600 million of that, and then they cut that in half to \$300 million, which really poisoned the whole energy around the LRT.

Then, of course, there's the two-way, all-day GO. This community was promised two-way, all-day GO service every 15 minutes. Now we have the promise of peak service, peak time, which never takes into account the fact that 10,000 people commute from Toronto to Kitchener–Waterloo. Waterloo region is a major economic engine for this province. That would be a smart investment. The municipality of Kitchener and the municipality of Waterloo, Communitech and the entire business com-

munity have rallied behind this investment, which you, in turn, turned your back on, which is really unfortunate, because it compromises confidence in all politicians. What an unfortunate thing to happen.

We were also promised electrified rail, and we were also promised high-speed rail. We were even promised a bullet train within five years for \$500 million. That was your predecessor; I'll give you credit for that. So far we haven't heard any bullets coming from you right now, but we have seen some major backtracking on promises on this issue.

To summarize, as I said, this budget does not address the needed revenue streams that this province relies on to invest in infrastructure. It does not address some of the social crises that we are seeing in all of our communities around aging in place with dignity, around hospital budgets that, quite honestly, have been frozen now for the fourth year in a row. People are paying the price.

To top it all off, we have the sale of a strategic public asset, Hydro One, which has proven to be—it's part of our history, it's part of our heritage as a province that it has provided reliable hydro. We have some control over those rates, because profit is not driving the agenda, and we have a reliable revenue stream that actually comes from that asset.

So we obviously cannot support this budget, just like last year we couldn't support an austerity budget—6% cuts in every ministry. If you think that people are not hurting in this province, I have to tell you that you really do have your heads in the sand, which is most unfortunate.

If you do the math on selling Hydro One, it doesn't add up.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's a good thing I have no hair.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Well, I'm not going to talk about the hair of the Minister of Transportation.

What I am going to say is that in year one of a four-year mandate, this government had the opportunity to be courageous and to set this province back to an idea of shared prosperity. By selling off a major strategic asset like Hydro One, you are essentially just throwing your hands up in the air, and I tell you, that does not instill confidence in the people of this province, from an economic perspective and from a social justice perspective, because the poverty rates that this government has been promising to address continue to increase, with no strategic plan around affordable housing and with no strategic plan to make public transit more affordable. It's really a missed opportunity, and I think that the people of this province deserve better.

1720

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions or comments? The member for Beaches–East York.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker; thank you, members.

Thank you to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. I would like to start by saying that we appreciate very much

her capacity to come out here and speak for an hour as a lead on behalf of her party. I know her remarks are very well reasoned. They're very well meaning, but let's be frank; let's be clear: They're very wrong.

I want to focus on three things she said. She spoke at length about the Hydro One sale, so I'd like to address my comments to her comments there, particularly her comment to "follow the money." If you follow the money, this is the right deal to do. An \$800-million recurring revenue stream is what makes this an asset to sell. Based on a \$15-billion evaluation, that's about a 5.3% return. As she has acknowledged, the bond rates are down to less than 2%. So at 5.3%, if we sell 60%, that's a \$9-billion—not \$4 billion, as she mentioned—increase in our capacity. What if the markets were actually prepared to take a 4% return on this money? A 4% return would value the company at \$20 billion, and at 60% that would be \$12 billion in our coffers—\$5 billion towards the debt and an additional \$7 billion towards building infrastructure, which is so important to this province.

She also talked about, "It's a fact that rates will go up." Had she done her due diligence on how the OEB works, she would know that you cannot use capital expenditures as a justification for a rate increase. The money that was spent to acquire these shares cannot be used as part of a rate increase. The way that the private sector makes money as a return on their investment is by efficiencies, by going through and doing innovation and finding new ways of doing it.

Finally, if anyone holding shares should operate in such a fashion that they exercise more than 10% control, subsection 48.2(1) ensures that Hydro takes steps to remove any kind of such collusion. Ten per cent is the maximum, and we stand by it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The member from Kitchener-Waterloo covered a broad range of issues on this budget we're debating and focused on the privatization of Hydro One. We've heard some very good presentations from the third party and from the opposition.

Again, much of the focus is on choices with respect to Hydro One, choices with respect to this \$27-billion debt. It's a debt that's supposed to be paid off by the money Hydro One would make by selling it off. Again, the question is: Now that this money, 60% of it, will go to the sell-off, in my view the debt will increase, the debt will balloon, and so will the price of electricity for homeowners, for businesses and for industry. Industry has choices in the province of Ontario and other states like North Carolina and Ohio.

The fact remains that electricity prices to date have tripled. The top-end price has tripled. Under this Liberal government, when they came in, the rate was 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour. Business knows this. I don't think we're going to see any alleviation of rates under this majority sale. This budget does not guarantee any savings in electricity. They've removed the oversight. It's surprising that, so recently after those Ornge hearings, they would

remove oversight over a major agency like Hydro One—and Ombudsman oversight and oversight by the Auditor General. And they have removed that public oversight with respect to the sunshine list.

In contrast to what was said, there are some cases for privatization and there are some good reasons to do that, but not just to get some money for this government to bail out their wasteful spending.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I want to first thank Catherine. It's a hard slog to do an hour on a bill the second time around, right?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** The member from Kitchener-Waterloo.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Kitchener-Waterloo, yes. But she did a great job.

I don't care what you call it. Whether you want to call it modernization, whether you want to call it realizing our assets, whatever it is, at the end of the day, it is a sell-off.

I want to take it right down to the little guy's level. I come from a community where we've lost 10,000 manufacturing jobs over the last 15 years. I've got a story here, a newspaper article from last week, from the owner of a little restaurant in Welland, 60 years in business, the Blue Star Restaurant: Bryan Moreau. He was asked to talk about selling off Hydro and what that was going to mean for him.

A 2% hike already, without selling off Hydro, is going to increase his bill, which is already \$4,000 a month for a restaurant. Add \$4,000 a month for heat and add another \$2,000 for water, and he's at \$10,000 before he even opens his doors.

He said, "You know what? I can't tell people, 'I'm going to cook your chicken in off-peak hours,' because my business operates from 7 in the morning until 7 o'clock at night. Off-peak starts at 7. So now you're telling me that I'm actually going to pay two cents more a kilowatt hour now, and once you privatize, I'm going to pay a lot more than that."

What we're doing here is increasing hydro rates and unreliability for customers. You're going to put a lot of small businesses like the Blue Star Restaurant out of business at the end of the day. We've already driven manufacturing across the border to New York state, where they have very low hydro rates and very low tax rates as incentives.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As always, it's a pleasure to have the opportunity to respond to some of the convenient mythology that's being spun by members of the NDP caucus.

What I find most remarkable about this is that this particular member—and I recognize she has the last word, at least at this particular stage—has stood in this House, both on debate on this particular budget bill and also over the last number of months, and she has railed, for example, about Infrastructure Ontario's approach to



making sure they partner with us and they partner with the private sector to build the province of Ontario up. She has gotten up repeatedly, including this afternoon, and talked about whether or not there will in fact be additional infrastructure projects supporting the region of Kitchener-Waterloo.

Of course, as I said as I was walking informally from my seat to the lobby as she was speaking earlier today, Highway 7 from Guelph to Kitchener will be under construction later this year. There are significant examples of the infrastructure investments that we keep making. The Minister of Education, representing the community of Guelph, actually went on at length this afternoon with respect to some of the other positive news that's coming for that particular region.

One of the things I'm really struck by is that, time and time again here in this chamber, I've heard that member and other members of the NDP rail, again, about Infrastructure Ontario and the alternate financing and procurement model that we've used over the last decade and beyond to build hospitals and courthouses and so much other transit and transportation infrastructure.

What is remarkable about that, Speaker, is that currently, in her own home community, in Kitchener-Waterloo, there is an LRT that is being built with provincial support of up to \$300 million for phase 1. That particular project, as per the direction from Waterloo regional council, is a contract that is what we call a "design, build, finance, operate and maintain" agreement, including private sector partners like Aecon and Meridian and Kiewit and others. What is most remarkable is not that the private sector is partnering with her home community. It's that she had the temerity to show up for the groundbreaking, for the photo op, yet she's here in this House suggesting that our government doesn't do this right. Shame on her, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Kitchener-Waterloo now has the opportunity to respond.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Boy, the Kool-Aid must be pretty strong over there, I tell you, because honestly, Mr. Speaker—I just want to thank, though, the members from Welland, Haldimand-Norfolk and Beaches-East York, and the minister.

1730

I can be respectful of the opinions that come out in this place, but the promises that have been made to people around this province on transportation, honestly, would make your head spin. They are a moving target. So I can see why the Minister of Transportation is so sensitive about these, because now those promises are very much connected to the federal election. It always does surprise me when that particular minister stands up and brags about investing \$300 million in our LRT. The original promise was \$600 million. He's basically bragging about coming to the table with half of the money, which is really investment—when I first ran back in 2007, that's when Highway 7 was first announced. They broke ground. The next year they cut the ribbon, and then

they broke ground again in 2008. Then they cut another ribbon in 2010. There were lots of ribbons and lots of dirt flying all over the place. It's good to see that it's actually coming through.

I tell you, I will show up. I will always show up and make sure that the people are actually getting what they were promised in the first place, and making sure that when that LRT is finally completed, they are going to find out what they're going to get for that extra \$49 million, which came with the AFP in that region.

You've got a tough job, I understand that, but the Kool-Aid is going to have to end, I think.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I will be sharing my time with the Minister of Transportation and the great member from Kingston and the Islands.

I am happy to have the opportunity to speak about the budget bill today. If I may, I want to talk about why I am proud of this budget bill. This is a budget that is for the people of this province for now and for the future. This is a budget that responds to the current and future needs, based on our consultations.

Le budget présenté par notre gouvernement cette année investit dans les Ontariens et les Ontariennes. À travers un plan solide pour édifier notre infrastructure sur les 10 prochaines années, nous attirerons plus de commerces ici en Ontario. Ce faisant, nous créerons plus d'emplois et ferons croître l'économie. C'est aussi un budget qui illustre bien notre position comme gouvernement sur plusieurs points. Il démontre notre engagement envers nos jeunes, envers le marché du travail, envers nos citoyens les plus vulnérables, envers l'environnement et bien plus.

Ce budget est bien plus qu'un simple compte rendu économique de la province. C'est notre engagement envers tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes, afin d'améliorer la qualité de vie dont ils bénéficient, sans oublier les générations futures. C'est un plan d'avenir audacieux qui prend le leadership sur plusieurs enjeux difficiles, tout en prenant soin des Ontariens et Ontariennes les plus vulnérables.

Ce budget est le premier pas vers un brillant avenir où l'Ontario pourra se vanter d'être le chef de file dans l'économie moderne grâce à des investissements historiques. C'est un budget dont je suis fière, aussi, car pour la deuxième année consécutive, il y a une reconnaissance directe du rôle important joué par les Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes dans notre belle province. En reconnaissant le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la présence française en Ontario et en allouant 5,9 millions de dollars pour célébrer ce moment historique, notre gouvernement continue dans sa longue tradition de soutenir l'épanouissement de la communauté francophone de l'Ontario.

Whether I worked as a nurse, a lawyer, a municipal councillor and as an MPP, I always have the same goal: Work together to make Ontario the best place to live for every Ontarian, from childhood to retirement. This budget

is another step towards this goal, and I am very proud of that. Some may have doubts and say that this goal is too big to reach, but I don't think so. I believe our only true strength as a province is our people, and if we invest in people, make sure they have the right opportunities and try to remove as many obstacles as possible out of their way, I know Ontarians will continue to be the driving force behind Ontario's greatness.

I heard speakers from the two opposition parties talking about Hydro One. Listening to them, we don't have the mandate to sell a part of it; we don't have the mandate to privatize part of it. But out there in the community, they're very interested. This weekend, I kept responding to phone calls from people in my community who wanted to invest in Hydro One. They want to be part of it. They want to invest in it. They want to see how they will be able to share the ownership with this government.

We need infrastructure. We need to build infrastructure, and we believe in it. That's why we have announced \$130 billion for the next 10 years. We would have liked to have a partner working with us. We would have liked to have the federal government working with us, but do you know what they did? They announced in their budget—they're balancing their budget on the back of Ontario—\$720 million for the whole of Canada, starting in 2017. Imagine how good that will be to build Ontario and build the rest of Canada.

The Canadian association of municipalities has said very loud and clear that we have a deficit in infrastructure and we need to rebuild infrastructure, and in order to do that, we need partners at the table. I hope that the MPPs on the other side will give a call to their counterparts at the federal level and make sure that they do invest in infrastructure. Investing in infrastructure has no political colour—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We've been trying to enforce a higher standard of decorum this afternoon, so I would ask all members of the House to come to order.

I return to the Attorney General. She has the floor.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Thank you very much, Speaker. When you look at other provinces or other large cities—the time is up? Oh, sorry. I have so much to say. I'll stop here, and I hope I will have a chance to speak about the need for infrastructure in Ontario. Mr. Speaker, I'll turn it over to you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I hesitate to intervene in the very eloquent remarks of my colleague the Attorney General. It's always a joy to listen to her provide her commentary and her insight with respect to such an important matter. Of course, we'll be sharing our time with our colleague from Kingston and the Islands momentarily.

As always, I sincerely enjoy the spirited and passionate debate that takes place in this Legislature, particularly around items like budgets. As many will know or remem-

ber, I did have the opportunity to serve for a couple of budgets—budget 2013 and the first version of budget 2014—as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, our current Minister of Finance. If there's one theme I have seen first-hand as the PA at finance and now in my time as Minister of Transportation, it is that we have a consistent and concerted plan to make sure we are building the province up. You see that right in the title of the bill itself: Building Ontario Up Act. It speaks to all that is the very best of what is included in this year's budget and this year's road map for making sure that we move the province forward.

I have stood in this place and had the opportunity to talk many, many times, thinking at a global or macro level, about what these investments in infrastructure mean for the province. I could go through this list, and I may just take the opportunity to mention a few things, because they are certainly important. But then I want to try, with my time, to bring it back to what is important to me locally, not as the Minister of Transportation but, in this case, serving proudly as the MPP representing the community of Vaughan.

In this budget book, opposition members and those watching at home will find a multitude of clear examples of projects in the infrastructure realm that support health care through hospital construction and renewal. They will find support for crucial infrastructure, again, in the post-secondary world.

**1740**

They will certainly, in my own portfolio, find support for a number of important highway projects. I know we had the chance this afternoon, both myself, the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and others, to add spirited debate to this notion of how important it is to proceed with the widening of Highway 7 from Kitchener to Guelph or from Guelph to Kitchener, Highways 11 and 17 from Thunder Bay to Nipigon, Highway 401 improvements in the London area, Highway 417 in the Ottawa area—this list does go on.

I heard a discussion earlier—I didn't have the chance in my two-minute response to talk about high-speed rail. Last November—I believe it was November—I had the privilege of being in London, a wonderful community so ably represented here in this Legislature by our Deputy Premier. I had the opportunity to be there to launch the environmental assessment for high-speed rail, which is a project that, when complete, will link, via high-speed rail, Toronto, Kitchener, Waterloo, London and Windsor. That's an EA project that's now under way. The Ministry of Transportation is leading that, and that work will take place over the next few years.

Of course, again in this budget book we see an ongoing commitment to our support, provincially, for dealing with the expansion of Maley Drive in Sudbury. We see the \$1-billion commitment that we have consistently put forward to support all of the economic development and job growth potential for the Ring of Fire.

And, of course, not that many days ago I had the opportunity to be in Sault Ste. Marie, standing alongside the



Minister of Government and Consumer Services and the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, to announce that because of this Premier—our Premier's vision and her ambitious plan to build the province up through the Moving Ontario Forward plan, that \$31.5 billion that we will invest over the next decade—we were able to reinstate a stand-alone Connecting Links program. Starting with funding in 2016, once we have completed the design of the program, working with our municipal partners, we will be able to support nearly 80 communities—about 350 kilometres of Connecting Links roads that exist here in province of Ontario. Again, that's because of the commitment that this Premier has to making sure that all of Ontario benefits fully from that \$31.5 billion.

Of course, you will all know that I talk proudly, and I think rightly so, about all of our transit investments that we see not only in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—though there are many that will help fulfill some of those transit ambitions that we have in this region, to make sure that we continue to successfully fight gridlock—but also to see our support for phase 1 of the Ottawa LRT. A phenomenal day not that many weeks ago, or a couple of months ago, when I was in Ottawa with all of our Ottawa colleagues to see what we called the unveiling of the mock-up for that LRT with Mayor Watson and so many other people—such an exciting day for Ottawa. And because of our commitment, along with the municipal and federal government, we are moving that project ahead.

We were at the table—in fact, I believe we were first to the table for the funding for phase 1 of the Ottawa LRT, and we will be back at the table, as a result of Moving Ontario Forward, for phase 2, a commitment that was a little bit fuzzy or unclear during last year's election campaign from Tim Hudak and the Conservatives.

Of course, Kitchener–Waterloo: I've already talked a little bit today about ION, phase 1, an AFP project with support from the private sector, helping us build out that crucial infrastructure. We were there at the table for the funding and the construction of phase 1, and again because of Moving Ontario Forward, because of our Premier's vision, plan and ambition for this province, we'll be there for phase 2, potential support for a BRT in London and so much more.

Not that many weeks ago, I was in Durham, and then again in a more easterly part of Durham, at the edge of the wonderful community of Peterborough, to announce the \$1.2-billion contract being awarded for phase 2 of Highway 407 East, a significant project that will help unlock so much economic development potential throughout Durham and leading into communities like Haliburton, Kawartha, Peterborough, Lindsay and so many others.

In fact, phase 1 of Highway 407 East will actually come into service later this year. By the end of this year, cars will be driving on Highway 407 East, phase 1, and the West Durham Link, or I believe Highway 412 is the

accurate number. So, an exciting time for that particular part of our region.

I'll say very quickly as well a number of transit projects that we've been able to announce in the last couple of weeks: the Finch LRT here in the 416, a \$1.2-billion LRT—much talked about over a number of years. We are proceeding with construction, which will start next year. Of course, I had the real honour to be in Etobicoke North, at Humber College, to announce that particular project with my colleague from Etobicoke North, my colleague the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. But importantly, when you think about that \$1.2-billion LRT, that is a transit project that will unite, will connect two post-secondary institutions: Humber College at the west end, and it will arrive right at the edge of York University. Importantly, it will run through two what we call priority neighbourhoods. I mentioned that day that as Metrolinx proceeds with that \$1.2-billion LRT, there will be a community benefits plan put in place to make sure that we help spur economic activity in those two communities.

The week before in Peel region, \$1.6 billion for the Hurontario–Main LRT: That's 22 kilometres of rapid transit that will be flowing north-south in that community, connecting people in Brampton and Mississauga to GO regional express rail, something that I know Mayors Jeffrey and Crombie were delighted to hear about.

Speaker, I mentioned GO RER a second ago. Let me just say, the week before the Hurontario–Main LRT, to be standing alongside our Premier and the MPP for Barrie to announce the very ambitious, very exciting and transformative GO regional express rail plan—\$13.5 billion over 10 years, positively impacting every single one of our seven GO corridors.

We will have a frequent, rapid and ready regional service along all of our corridors—hundreds of new trips on each corridor over the next five years. Over that next decade, on a number of our corridors, fully electrified two-way, all-day GO service at up to 15-minute intervals, including—and this is important; it's important for the member from York South–Weston and the member from Davenport, the member from Trinity–Spadina and so many others, including the member from Etobicoke North—the Union Pearson Express. A number of us had the opportunity to be on that train to see what it looked like and felt like first-hand not that many days ago.

After many years of planning and many years, again, of involving the private sector to build the western spur for the Union Pearson Express, starting this June 6, well in time for the Pan/Parapan Am Games, as we committed, that Union Pearson Express will come into service.

Speaker, I mentioned all of these projects. I'm not going to get the chance to talk specifically about my community, but this is why it's so important to support our plan, to support our Premier, to support our government, but most importantly to support this province. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak in support of Bill 91. I will endeavour to keep my comments positive and stay out of the convenient mythology territory.

I am impressed with the bill and the measured and pragmatic big-picture approach that it takes to securing the long-term sustainability of our economy while maintaining and improving the quality of vital public services that we all rely on.

As a former small business owner, and after listening to constituents' concerns every day for seven years in our federal constituency office, I understand the crucial importance of continuing to support innovation, progress and a dynamic business climate in this province.

This is why I'm very encouraged by the bill's new initiative to help Ontario start-ups expand to the next level and the increased funding commitment to the Jobs and Prosperity Fund. This fund will improve productivity, competitiveness and access to global markets. It will also encourage strategic partnerships and empower the next-generation industries.

We all know that despite the side of the House that we speak from, no economy, no government can generate growth without investing in infrastructure. I therefore applaud the bill's unprecedented \$130-billion commitment to renewing and expanding public infrastructure and transportation over the next 10 years.

I'm referring to the new roads, bridges and transit that will link communities and move goods and people around this province faster and more efficiently. It's well known that congestion and pollution cost the economy billions of dollars directly and indirectly. These investments are absolutely essential to the long-term growth and sustainability of our economy, and they benefit all of us. I support that vision.

During my pre-budget-tele-town hall consultation, members of my community identified more jobs for young people as one of their top priorities. Through Bill 91, we are increasing incentives for businesses to train and employ young Ontarians. Through Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy, through trade apprenticeship and entrepreneurship opportunities, we are helping to connect more youth to the job market after they graduate, and we're mentoring and inspiring Ontario's next generation of leaders.

1750

The many post-secondary students in my riding, at Queen's, St. Lawrence College and Royal Military College, have been pleased to learn that if this bill passes, their OSAP loan limits will be higher and a vehicle and part-time work will be exempted from their assessment.

Kingston and the Islands' mix of leading health care facilities, such as Kingston General Hospital, Providence Care and Hotel Dieu Hospital, excellent social services and stunning geography has made it one of Canada's destinations of choice for retirees. So I was delighted by the increased funding for seniors.

I am also delighted about the maintenance and increase to the Seniors Community Grant Program. This

great program encourages inclusion, health education, volunteering and community engagement of our seniors. I would strongly recommend all members from all sides of this House to apply for that fund and make sure that you serve your seniors in the best way that you can.

Increasing customer convenience and choice on how beer is sold in Ontario is also extremely important for smaller craft brewers across the province. It's also a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, these are a few examples of how Bill 91 will benefit the people of Ontario. Therefore, I give my support to Bill 91.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I listened with interest to the comments from different speakers on the government side, and I'm certainly glad that they're not teaching my grandchildren their kind of math in school, because they'd never pass.

They should start listening to stakeholders in this province who have criticized what they are doing. One happens to be the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. These are their comments on the carbon tax: "Ontario cannot afford to drive investment elsewhere. If the province implements a carbon tax we will lose high-paying jobs and manufacturing investment."

Again, I can understand that this government does not want to listen to stakeholders in making their decisions. I refer back to the Attorney General when she won't listen to stakeholders on joint and several liability. So I can understand why they do this.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has come out strongly against the proposed pension tax, stating that 86% of small business owners surveyed did not support the plan. Again, they won't listen.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce also says that 26% of businesses believe that they may be able to handle the pension tax and 44% of businesses indicate they would reduce their current payroll or hire fewer employees.

This budget, in the next few years, is going to strap our descendants, our grandchildren, with \$23,000 in tax burden. That's terrible. You really should apologize for those types of policies because you're putting this debt on the backs of our descendants, and this is certainly not fair at all.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Kitchener—Waterloo.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's interesting: I said earlier that there was some Kool-Aid over there, but there might be something stronger in that Kool-Aid—after listening to the Minister of Transportation.

The government's decision to delay, yet again, the construction of the Sheppard East LRT will mean that there will be no transit relief for the people in Scarborough or—

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Point of order—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Are you in your seat?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Shit.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** First of all, you have to be in your seat to do a point of order.

Point of order, the member for Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I believe the member is reading from an electronic device, which is not allowed by the rules of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Anything else to add?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I do withdraw my comment. I apologize.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member is quite correct. It has been the ruling of the Speaker that we not read from electronic devices while we're speaking in the House.

The member for Kitchener–Waterloo has the floor still. I'll give her a little more time to conclude.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** To listen to the Minister of Transportation talk about all of these promises in the face of a major backtrack on the Scarborough LRT flies in the face of everything that they've been saying. I just want to say that the people of Kitchener–Waterloo know the truth. They're living it every day on that GO train. They know the difference between five years and 10 years. They know the difference between two-way, all-day, every 15 minutes and peak service/peak direction. And they know the difference between an electrified train and a diesel train.

People can say what they're going to say in this House, but it's when the rubber hits the road or when the rails hit the rails that actually makes the difference. In this budget, this government is bragging about saving \$1.4 billion by not following through on promises. It's shameful.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I think it is clear—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Your electronic device—

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I'm not looking at it, Speaker. In fact, I'm allowing you to look at it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm asking you to set it down, please. Thank you.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I think it's clear, Speaker, that when the government of Ontario needs to make the trains run on time, we turn to Il Duce, Steven Del Duca, the Minister of Transportation and the MPP for Vaughan. I would personally like to thank Minister Del Duca for coming to my own riding of Etobicoke North and announcing the \$1.2-billion Finch LRT. I can tell him on behalf of my own residents that that truly will be change-inducing and transformative.

We have eight stops right in my own riding: Humber College, Highway 27, Westmore, Martin Grove, Albion, Stevenson, Kipling and Islington.

If that were not enough, we were joined by the then-praising John Tory, Councillor Joshua Colle and President Chris Whitaker of Humber College, who were all obviously delighted with this expansion.

If that in itself were not enough, I had the privilege of riding not only with the Minister of Transportation but also with the honourable Premier of this province, to whom I am the parliamentary assistant, on the Union Pearson Express, which, of course, also cuts through the heart of my riding.

I thank the visionary leaders on this side, whether it's the bureaucrats, the political staff or the ministerial staff. And, of course, it's ultimately empowered and given direction to by the Premier. This is going to change our province and certainly my own riding of Etobicoke North. That, I think, is something to celebrate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to provide a couple of minutes of questions and comments.

I found the statements of the three government speakers to be quite in contrast. You had the two ministers who became, as they can be, quite partisan from time to time, yet you had the member for Kingston and the Islands; she's my neighbour. I found that she provided sort of a unique perspective. Let's face it, Speaker: We've had a fairly partisan afternoon between the three parties. We took our shots at each other. And then you had my neighbour Ms. Kiwala from Kingston and the Islands keep it positive and classy. I just wanted to give her that shout-out.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** There you go. That's right. One of the things that she mentioned was post-secondary education. I know that she and I both share a campus of St. Lawrence College. I had the opportunity to go to the last community council meeting for the Brockville campus and really got a great overview of the good things that are happening at that campus.

But I am worried, Speaker. I am worried about this budget and the direction it's taking. Certainly she talked about health care. I know that the Kingston hospitals do serve part of my riding, but I do see this government's cuts to health care playing out in the hallways at the Brockville General Hospital. I've seen it last year in last year's budget with now one less post-secondary educational facility in my riding, that being the closure of Kemptville College. So while I applaud my neighbour, I can see that the regionalization of eastern Ontario has started. I'm very concerned with this eastern Ontario growth plan that's being discussed in the budget. I fear that plan will be a one-size-fits-all planning plan for our community. I happen to have faith in my local mayors and local councillors that, in a rural riding, they can make those growth decisions for my constituents. I have faith in them, and I wanted to make sure that, before the end of the day, I put that on the record, Speaker, so thank you for giving me that chance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments for this round.

I return to the Minister of Transportation for his reply.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank all four of the other speakers.

I'll begin, actually, with the final speaker, the member from Leeds-Grenville. I do appreciate him, in a very considered and thoughtful way, putting forward his comments, and also, at the outset, his comments with respect to perhaps some of that partisan jabbing that occurred here this afternoon. I hope that the member from Leeds-Grenville, who I have a great deal of regard for, will forgive me for what's about to come.

I think there's a reason that there is so much energy here this afternoon. When I listen to that member or, at least this afternoon, most of his colleagues—and I certainly have over the last number of weeks—I feel the anguish and the pain that is emanating from that particular caucus. Of course, to have to go into next weekend and choose your fourth leader in the last 12 years must be very troubling. I get that. I feel that pain.

But fundamentally, the presence of that pain and discomfort and anguish that you feel, notwithstanding all of your collective performances over the last 12 years that have been so strongly rejected by the people of Ontario, not once, not twice, not three times, but four times—that's no reason to not support this budget, because it builds your communities up, as well—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'd ask the member for Leeds-Grenville to come to order and stop thumping the desk.

The Minister of Transportation has 30 seconds to conclude.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you very much. I want to say to the members of the NDP that I also feel the anguish and pain that comes from that caucus because they see that after they had the opportunity last May to accept the most progressive budget put forward by the most progressive Premier in Ontario's history, they rejected it and then they were so soundly repudiated by the people of Ontario. To see these projects going forward and this province being built up must drive them deservedly crazy.

We're going to pass this budget. We're going to move the province forward.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1802.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadi  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











## Canadian Music Week

Mr. Mike Colle.....4023

## Star Wars Day

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....4023

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

### Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

M. Shafiq Qaadri.....4023

Report adopted.....4023

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

### Special Interest Groups Election Advertising Transparency Act, 2015, Bill 96, Mr. Walker / Loi de 2015 sur la transparence de la publicité électorale des groupes d'intérêt particulier, projet de loi 96, M. Walker

First reading agreed to.....4023

Mr. Bill Walker.....4023

## PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

### Alzheimer's disease

Mr. Bill Walker.....4024

### Special-needs children

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....4024

### Use of digital technologies

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri .....4024

### Winter road maintenance

Mr. Norm Miller .....4025

### Ontario Northland Transportation Commission

Mr. John Vanthof.....4025

### Water fluoridation

Mr. Bob Delaney.....4025

### Taxation

Mr. Bill Walker.....4026

### Alzheimer's disease

Ms. Peggy Sattler .....4026

### Use of digital technologies

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri .....4026

### Off-road vehicles

Mr. Bill Walker.....4026

### Use of digital technologies

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri .....4027

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....4027

Ms. Peggy Sattler .....4035

Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....4035

Mr. Steve Clark .....4035

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....4036

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....4036

Mme France Gélinas .....4036

Hon. Bill Mauro .....4039

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....4039

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....4039

Ms. Ann Hoggarth.....4040

Mme France Gélinas .....4040

Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....4040

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....4041

Mr. John Fraser .....4042

Mr. Bob Delaney.....4043

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....4043

Ms. Catherine Fife.....4044

Hon. Liz Sandals .....4044

Mr. Bill Walker .....4044

Mr. John Fraser .....4045

Mr. Bill Walker .....4045

Mr. Paul Miller.....4049

Mr. Chris Ballard.....4049

Mr. Robert Bailey.....4049

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....4050

Mr. Bill Walker.....4050

Ms. Catherine Fife.....4051

Mr. Arthur Potts .....4058

Mr. Toby Barrett .....4059

Ms. Cindy Forster.....4059

Hon. Steven Del Duca.....4059

Ms. Catherine Fife.....4060

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....4060

Hon. Steven Del Duca.....4061

Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....4063

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....4063

Ms. Catherine Fife.....4063

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri.....4064

Mr. Steve Clark .....4064

Hon. Steven Del Duca.....4064

Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....4065



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 4 May 2015 / Lundi 4 mai 2015

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4009
Mr. Grant Crack .....	4009
Mr. Paul Miller.....	4009
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4009
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4009

#### Member's anniversary

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4009
-------------------------------------	------

#### Wearing of ribbons

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4009
-----------------------------	------

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4009
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4009
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4010

#### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Michael Harris.....	4010
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4011
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4011

#### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4011
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4012

#### Infrastructure program funding

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4012
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4013

#### Social Assistance Management System

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4014
Hon. Helena Jaczek.....	4014

#### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	4014
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4014

#### Public safety

Mr. Glenn Thibeault.....	4015
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4015

#### Privatization of public assets

Mr. John Yakabuski.....	4015
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4016

#### Government advertising

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4016
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4016

#### Mental health and addictions strategy

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde.....	4017
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4017

#### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Lisa MacLeod.....	4017
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4017
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4018

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mme France Gélinas .....	4018
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4018

#### Cancer prevention

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4019
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4019

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	4019
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4020

#### Automotive industry

Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4020
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4020

#### Correction of record

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4020
------------------------------	------

#### Visitor

Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4020
-----------------------	------

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

#### United Way

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4020
----------------------------	------

#### Steps for Life walk

Ms. Peggy Sattler.....	4021
------------------------	------

#### Seniors' issues

Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4021
---------------------	------

#### Energy sector

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	4021
------------------------	------

#### Moose tags

Mr. John Vanthof .....	4022
------------------------	------

#### 2nd Battalion, Irish Regiment of Canada

Mr. Glenn Thibeault.....	4022
--------------------------	------

#### Bob Huskinson

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4022
-----------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*

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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 5 May 2015

Mardi 5 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 5 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 5 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Orders of the day.

*Interruption.*

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Good morning, Speaker. Somebody is trying to get into the House—really wants to get in.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 30, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When we last debated this issue, the rotation had been completed, and it's now further debate. The member from Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I have to apologize to you because I broke the door trying to get into the chamber so that I could take my place in the House. There's a hinge that came out of the door; it's going to have to be replaced. I know our staff were a little nervous that I wasn't in the chamber at the time of the prayers, and I apologize for that, too.

At the same time, I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to debate the budget motion that was tabled in this House shortly after the presentation of the budget. We, of course, have a nice blue copy—sorry, it's red—a red copy of the provincial budget. Building Ontario Up is what the government calls it. It was presented in the House a few days ago, as we know.

I want to begin my remarks by acknowledging an important day in the country of Holland. Today is the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Holland. As we know, Mr. Speaker, it was in part due to the sacrifice, the courage and the dedication of Canadian soldiers, who were primarily responsible for the liberation of Holland and bringing to an end the tyranny of the Nazi regime in that country during World War II. Many Canadian soldiers, believe it or not, are able to be in Holland today to mark that 70th anniversary. It may be the last time that the greatest generation will be able to be present in Holland for this commemoration. We're thinking of the Dutch people today and also the extraordinary contribution that our Dutch-Canadians have made, because there was a

huge wave of immigration to Canada after the First World War of people from Holland. They have made an immeasurable contribution to the country and to the province of Ontario, so we remember them today.

I want to begin by clarifying something that seems to be a bit misunderstood around here, even in the Legislature, perhaps in the media and perhaps amongst some in the general public. We are debating the budget motion right now. This is the motion that is tabled after the provincial budget, and it's very straightforward and simple. It's one line, really. Proposed by the government, it's suggesting that the House has confidence, in general, in the budgetary policy of the government.

We in opposition do not have confidence, in general, in the budgetary policy of the government. So it would be logical—and I know you would agree, Mr. Speaker—if we don't have confidence in the budgetary policy of the government, that we would vote against the budget motion. This is something that was somewhat distorted by Liberal strategists during the minority Parliament back in 2011. You'll recall, Mr. Speaker, that in fact the Liberal Party paid for robocalls in the ridings of Burlington and Cambridge, seats that we held with our members Jane McKenna and Rob Leone, who had been newly elected in 2011. Robocalls were paid for by the Liberal Party into those ridings, telling the people of those ridings that if their Conservative members, Rob Leone and Jane McKenna, voted against the budget motion, they were therefore voting against their hospital projects. That is a false statement, and the Liberal strategists should have known that. I believe they did know that, and yet those robocalls were made.

In my riding, there were Liberals who wrote letters to the editor—yes, that's exactly correct. In my riding, there were letters to the editor sent by Liberals suggesting that if I voted against the budget motion in 2011—after the provincial election, when we were in the minority period—I was voting against my hospital projects. Again, absolutely a false statement. What we are voting on is the budgetary policy of the government in general.

The fact is that of course the New Democrats, during the minority period, negotiated with the government, and certain things were included in the budget. For a two-year period they were prepared to, if not support the budget, at least abstain to allow the budget to pass, to prevent an election. But I would caution those members of the House—and I know there are many Liberals here who are interested in this; we all have a conscience—that it is completely false to suggest that any member is voting against a project in their riding if they vote against the



budget motion and the budgetary policy of the government.

Indeed, when the Liberal Party was in opposition, when our party was in government between 1995 and 2003, in every single case the Liberal caucus voted against the budget motion. There was no question about it. And it's logical that they did, Mr. Speaker, because in those days, they did not support the budgetary policy of the Progressive Conservative government.

I wanted to get that off my chest because it has bothered me for some time. I hope that the government members will contemplate it, and I hope that the Liberal strategists who authored that approach of doing robocalls into Conservative ridings don't ever try that again.

I want to mention the key numbers that are in this budget and compare them to last year's. The provincial deficit for 2015-16 is \$8.5 billion. This, in fact, is actually down from last year; there was a \$10.9-billion deficit last year. But you'll recall in the budget last year that they actually projected a \$12.5-billion deficit and, in turn, before the budget, acknowledged that they'd come in under that projection, at \$10.9 billion.

There's really little explanation for the difference, other than that the government patted itself on the back and said that they'd done a good job of managing the expenditures and that was what accounted for the difference.

In fact, we sometimes wonder if the government uses assumptions that create a higher deficit number than is really what they expect, and when they come in under that number they take credit for their good management as a way of distracting and diverting attention away from the fact that it is still a very sizable number.

Nevertheless, the government continues to claim and to submit to the people of Ontario that they plan to balance the budget by 2017-18. They are committed to doing this. We've been saying for the last two or three years now, as the deficit has actually gone up year over year, that it's pretty hard to believe they're going to be able to balance that budget. I will acknowledge that it is true that this year the deficit has in fact come down, and if the deficit continues to come down—say, \$2 billion to \$3 billion a year, or \$4 billion a year—we get closer, of course, to that goal of a balanced budget. But I still would question the government's commitment: when the tough decisions have to be made in the next three years, whether or not they'll be prepared to make them to actually achieve that goal of a balanced budget.

Of great concern, though, is the projected provincial net debt number, which continues to go up dramatically. This year, in the provincial budget: \$298.9 billion—almost \$299 billion; this is up from \$284.2 billion last year—gone up \$14.7 billion. The debt has gone up \$14.7 billion year over year. That means it has increased—simple math—over a billion dollars a month. The debt has gone up over this past year.

0910

Provincial government spending this year is projected to be \$131.9 billion. That's \$132 billion, rounded off.

That is up from \$129.5 billion last year—a \$2.4-billion increase year over year. Again, the government would have us believe they're holding the line on spending and being successful in that regard. In fact, their spending is going up \$2.4 billion more than last year, according to their own numbers in the provincial budget.

Another serious concern is the net debt per capita. That, of course, is the amount, in effect, that each of us owes because of years of provincial government overspending. Every man, woman and child in the province of Ontario, in effect, owes this sum of money because of years and years and years of provincial government overspending—spending beyond its means in a given year. The net debt per capita this year is now at \$21,642; last year, it was \$20,772. That means the net debt per capita has gone up \$870 just in the last year. Again, that's something that should concern us all if we care about the next generation, our children and our grandchildren. I certainly do, and I know most of us do, but unfortunately, in this budget process, it seems that that concern has been repeatedly overlooked, going back to 2003.

Another important indicator of the crushing level of debt that the province of Ontario is carrying is the debt-to-GDP ratio. That takes the total debt and compares it to the value of the goods and services that we produce in the province of Ontario. That's what the gross domestic product is: the total value of what we produce in terms of goods and services in the province of Ontario. That's an important indicator because it allows us to look at how we can serve the debt. It's our capacity to service the debt and pay down the debt, pay the interest payments, and hopefully someday get to the point of paying down the principal. That debt-to-GDP ratio now stands at 39.8%, up again from last year. It was 39.4% last year, so almost half a percentage point increase. Just to compare—again, this is getting close to 40%: Before the recession in 2008-09, that number was 26.2%. So that number has gone up dramatically as well. Again, it underscores the punishing level of debt that has been incurred in recent years.

Of course, what does that mean to people? Well, we have to service the debt; we have to make interest payments on the debt. If the provincial government is going to remain solvent and meet its obligations, its debt service payments come first. If we stop paying our debt interest, of course, we would not be able to borrow money at all and we would be in a financial crisis in the province of Ontario.

That becomes, basically—the first call in the government's finances is to pay the interest on the debt. That number, not surprisingly, continues to grow dramatically. In fact, it is now the third-largest item in the provincial budget after health and education. It's also, in recent years, the fastest-growing item in the provincial budget—something that I pointed out in question period a couple of years ago. It's now well understood that it is the fastest-growing item in the budget. It's expected and projected to go up 5.7% per year, on average, for the foreseeable future. That's a number, again, that is taken

from the budget papers. I know there are some skeptics. It's on page 281 of the budget papers. It shows that the interest on the debt is expected to grow by 5.7% for the foreseeable future as far out as 2017-18. That's as far as the graph shows.

At the same time, the government would lead us to believe that they're constraining costs in so many other areas. In fact, they are constraining health care costs, and they've seen a substantial increase in transfers from the federal government to the provincial government for health care.

Again, I'll refer to the budget papers document, where we see that the Canada Health Transfer—\$12.4 billion last year—has gone up to over \$13 billion this year. At the same time, the provincial government's expenditures on health have gone up less than that. By my math, the provincial expenditures on health care are only going up \$598 million this year, while at the same time the federal government is increasing the transfers for health by \$652 million. The federal government is giving us more for health, and the provincial government isn't even spending that increase on health. In effect, given the fact that the interest costs are going up dramatically, it's pretty logical to conclude that the money that is earmarked for health care—that the federal government is intending to give us for health care—is in fact being spent to service the debt. That's how bad it has gotten under this government.

People need to understand. These are all big numbers and it's difficult to understand them, but we have to educate ourselves in terms of financial literacy. If we don't—if all the members in this House don't understand the budgetary numbers—obviously, we've got a more serious problem, perhaps, than any of us realize.

Again, the interest payments on the debt this year are projected to be \$11.4 billion. That's up from \$10.7 billion last year—again, the fastest-growing item in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have very much time. I look at the clock and I realize the time has gone very quickly for me. But I also wanted to point out some of the economic policies that have been advocated by my colleague the member for Whitby—Oshawa, who of course is seeking the leadership of our Ontario provincial PC Party. I support her leadership bid, and I believe she is the most qualified person to be the next leader of our party and to be the Premier of Ontario.

For me, it's not all about winning elections. It's actually all about good government. I realize that we have to win elections in order to form government. I realize that winning is obviously the objective of an election campaign, and during an election campaign we work all-out towards that objective. But when the election is over, it's over, and we all have a job to do.

I think it's also true that, for the people who are involved in politics in my riding—in all parties—winning is important, but it's winning as a means to an end. Winning isn't the end in itself. Winning is the means to an end, with the end, of course, being good government. I

would add that comment to this debate too, and ask members to consider that.

Christine Elliott, in her speech at this Legislature—actually, in the wintertime—gave a very compelling plan to strengthen Ontario's economy and encourage the creation of the new jobs that we need.

She said that first of all, we must do a better job of building a competitive business climate to stimulate job-creating investment. She suggested that by making regulatory reform an immediate priority in the first 100 days of a government led by her, by taking steps to simplify the tax code, and by reducing business taxes, we would be sending a very powerful message to Ontario job creators that we are open for business once again. Of course, Mr. Speaker, that is very important for business confidence.

We have to acknowledge that provincial government initiatives are only one element of creating or deflating business confidence. There are other factors at play, some of which we can't control. But the fact is we do have an opportunity to encourage business confidence with the policies that come out of this place. Obviously, from our perspective, we would suggest that the provincial government hasn't been doing that for the last 13 years, and we need to do better.

Christine Elliott has advocated policies that would, in fact, create that strong sense of business confidence in terms of the support from the provincial Legislature and the government and, hopefully, that would stimulate the creation of many thousands of jobs in the province of Ontario.

Secondly, she talked about a renewed focus on skills training and the need to reform the apprenticeship system. She said that that would pay immediate dividends in the form of job creation. I think she's absolutely right about that and should be commended for that suggestion.

She said that young people and employers need incentives to pursue the existing job opportunities in today's economy. I agree with that, without qualification. Certainly, we have a very high youth unemployment rate in the province of Ontario. I think it's about double the overall rate, and that should be of concern of all of us. We need to do better on that particular public policy challenge.

She also suggested that we need to open up student loans to apprentices, ensuring that more young people would pursue careers in good-paying, skilled trades.

**0920**

She also advocated a new approach to supporting creative innovation and entrepreneurship in our economy. She suggested that by issuing a competitive challenge, rewarding excellence in achievement, speeding up the work of the Ontario Securities Commission and creating an advanced manufacturing fund to support research and development, this would help us to lead the world in innovation—again, all laudable goals that I support and that many in my community support as well.

She also outlined her vision for strengthening our economy in the long term, including new ideas to pay for



the new infrastructure that we need. She committed to bringing stability to our hydro rates, which have skyrocketed in recent years, which in turn has contributed to the loss of some 300,000 manufacturing jobs in the province of Ontario.

I'm privileged to serve as our party's critic to the Minister of Economic Development, Infrastructure and Employment. I certainly endorse the member for Whitby-Oshawa, Christine Elliott's, economic plan and believe that it is obviously a plan that would take us in the right direction in the province of Ontario.

I would also add in the brief time that I have left that we have a significant number of infrastructure projects in our riding. I've advocated for my riding, as you know, Mr. Speaker, on a long list of infrastructure projects. The fact is that the provincial government plans and certainly budgets to spend a significant amount of money on infrastructure. Again, page 291 of the budget papers shows that they intend to spend \$13.5 billion this year on infrastructure projects. I know they're going to spend that money; they plan to spend it, they committed, they talk about it all the time, and the Premier is tweeting constantly about the infrastructure plans they have. They are going to spend that money, so I am saying that in Wellington-Halton Hills, we have our infrastructure challenges, we have our needs and we need our fair share of that money.

I again submit to the government the need for the Highway 6 Morriston bypass through Puslinch township, south of the 401 on the way to Hamilton. The Premier has acknowledged that that project is needed in this Legislature, and we ask that the Minister of Transportation—something I've been advocating for many years now—place that project on the five-year plan for new construction, which we know as the southern highways program. I know that the minister, after the tabling of the budget, goes through a process of reviewing the various project ideas that exist. His staff know about the need; I'm sure his staff will fill him in on any additional information he needs, but there's a strong business coalition that has come together in support of this project, including all of the local councils, chambers of commerce and so forth. We need to see that project done.

We need a new courthouse in Halton. We need a new Holy Cross Catholic school in Georgetown. I've supported GO Transit improvements for my riding going back to 2008. We need high-speed Internet service in rural Ontario. We need support for the town of Erin waste water management system, something that needs to be addressed very soon.

I realize I'm now out of time. I've got a long list of other projects I'd like to talk about, and I will at another opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I do not support the general budgetary policy of this government and I'll be voting against this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I thank the member from Wellington-Halton Hills for his informal comments with regard to Bill 91. Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'd like to thank the member from Wellington-Halton Hills for participating in this debate today; it's a very important bill and debate on the budget.

In his opening remarks, he referred to looking at the blue book, and then corrected himself and said, "Oh, it was the red book." For us on this side: Blue book, red book; it's one and the same.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** It's an orange book.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's one and the same. The budget that the Liberal government is presenting looks like a Progressive Conservative budget. It's not very progressive, as the Premier claims to be progressive.

One of the things that I want to point out is seniors, because I am the seniors' critic. Just today, there was some information in the paper—and it was on the news as well—about how more and more seniors are filing for insolvency. It speaks to the fact that seniors have a very difficult time paying the bills. They have a very difficult time affording the rent, paying for their food and then for hydro.

In this budget, as the government proposed, they're going to be selling hydro. What's that going to do to the rates? What's that going to do to the seniors' budgets, their household budgets? They can barely afford to make ends meet now. It says that more seniors are filing for bankruptcy. How shameful is that, that seniors can't live in dignity after they retire, with some comfort, some peace of mind? Selling off hydro is not going to help seniors. It's only going to raise the rates, and seniors are going to be strapped even more and will find themselves in a more precarious situation, find themselves struggling every day just to put food on the table, because their hydro bills are higher.

I received my hydro bill, and it went up last Friday. The rates have gone up. It has gone up \$25 a month. Speaker, how do people who are on fixed incomes afford these kinds of ridiculous increases?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's a pleasure to rise today and add a few comments to the debate in the House. I've heard from the Wellington-Halton Hills member and the member from London-Fanshawe about this very important budget bill, Bill 91.

I'm very supportive of this budget. I just wanted to point out that during the budget processes, when we look at some of our construction programs—we have an ongoing expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital that was cemented in the budget a couple of budgets ago, and I'm very proud of the fact that it's still committed to finishing and completing this project. It has been a very necessary part of our health care system for the residents of Cambridge and North Dumfries township. We did the ground-breaking in September, and it makes me very happy to go past and see the crane there, see the construction equipment.

All those things are still in our budget, to make sure that we continue on this very important project. It not

only supports the construction workers and the highly skilled trades workers in Cambridge, so they have ongoing work for five years, but it also gives a sense of comfort to the residents of our community, who had been wanting and needing this expansion for so long.

That's one of the things that I would point out to the member from Wellington-Halton Hills: that it's very important to actually vote for the budgets that have these big construction programs in them.

I also just wanted to point out the investment in our youth, with the increases in the Ontario youth strategies and our investments in the pre-apprenticeship programs, which really benefit Cambridge students. We have Conestoga College, right in Cambridge, which has a lot of good apprenticeship programs for our youth in ongoing, highly skilled trades.

Speaker, I know I'm out of time. I'll add my voice later to the debate, but I just really want to say that I'm in full support of Bill 91, the budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to stand and bring remarks on the presentation by my colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills. I stand shoulder to shoulder with him.

There's no reason for us, and there's no reason for rural Ontario, especially small and rural municipalities, to support this budget. Don't just take our word for it, Speaker. There's a story in today's Belleville Intelligencer from the warden of Hastings county, which I'm fortunate enough to represent. He says there's "not a lot of substance" in this budget. To paraphrase, he says there are a lot of platitudes in this budget but there's no real, concrete action for rural Ontario.

The mayor of Quinte West had the opportunity to listen to the Premier speak in Belleville last week at the OSUM conference, the Ontario Small Urban Municipalities conference. He said he was not impressed at all, because there's nothing there in this budget except for reannouncements from last year and a lot of platitudes again coming from this government. There is no real action to improve life in rural Ontario. I think it just speaks to the larger picture that this government either doesn't care about rural Ontario or doesn't understand rural Ontario.

There's \$100 million in an infrastructure fund for small and rural municipalities, but they don't know how to get their hands on it. There has been no information as to how they can access that money.

At the question-and-answer last week, the deputy mayor of Greater Napanee asked about electricity infrastructure. Just last week, we learned that we were missing out on a \$100-million investment by Goodyear in Napanee, and the reason that it's not going there is because of the energy policies of this government which drove that plant and that infrastructure to Mexico.

There's nothing in this budget for us to support. I stand shoulder to shoulder with my colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills, and we will not be supporting the budget.

0930

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** In this short two minutes, I think I'm going to comment on the comments.

The member from Cambridge talked about the residents in her community having comfort that this construction is going on in this great expansion to the hospital in her area. Well, in my area, five hospitals have closed or are slated for closing: Fort Erie, Port Colborne, Niagara-on-the-Lake, just April 1 in the member from Niagara Falls' riding, and a proposed closure of the Welland hospital, a hospital that supports a population of 100,000 people.

This Liberal budget with its 6% cuts and zero increases to hospitals is continuing to lay off nurses in this province—hundreds of nurses have been laid off across this province. As a nurse, the member will know that every time you decrease a nursing position, you increase mortality rates of patients. In this province and across North America, there are lots of studies on this issue.

Teachers are on strike because of budget cuts.

There are 6% cuts to all of the agencies that actually support occupational health and safety in this province. Just in the last month we have had five deaths here in the city of Toronto in areas of construction—people falling off of scaffolds, people dying in blasts—and at the same time, this government is cutting those budgets.

She talked about youth strategies and their investment. Well, in fact, the Liberal government is cutting \$50 million from the youth employment tax credits that were there last year, an initiative that they put in place for a year, and all they're doing now is shifting the dollars.

I won't be supporting this budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Don't I get a response?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Oh, I'm sorry; forgive me. Absolutely. I got ahead of myself there; sorry about that.

Back to the member from Wellington-Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for London-Fanshawe, the member for Cambridge, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings and the member for Welland for their responses.

I'm pleased to see that the Deputy Premier is in the House, and I want to acknowledge—there was one element of the budget that was in fact good news in my constituency, and that was the restoration of the Connecting Link Program.

Reading in the Wellington Advertiser last night, I was made aware of the fact that the Deputy Premier called the warden of Wellington county, George Bridge, to inform him that the Connecting Link Program was being restored. We're trying to remember which Liberal minister cancelled the Connecting Link Program—I think it was two years ago or thereabouts; maybe two and a half years ago. We can't remember which minister it was, but I'm sure that minister would want to own up to the fact that it was a mistake.



I also want to give acknowledgement to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, who I think made public statements right off the bat that it was a mistake to cancel the Connecting Link Program, and I think he advocated within cabinet for its restoration.

Certainly, on this side of the House, we represent rural Ontario in this caucus, largely speaking, and we advocated for the restoration of the Connecting Link Program. I just would say to the Deputy Premier that I hope she didn't call the warden of Wellington county until after the budget was presented, because we certainly wouldn't want to divulge confidential budgetary information in advance of the presentation of the budget. So I would hope—no, we wouldn't want to do that.

But again, I do want to acknowledge that that was received as good news in our riding and certainly in the town of Halton Hills, which had felt very shortchanged by the arbitrary cancellation of the Connecting Link Program. They had a long-term plan to do a number of projects, and in fact, they are now relieved to see that that program is going to be continued.

But I still have questions about it. I asked rhetorically, when the announcement was made, whether or not this was an allocation of new money or a reallocation of existing funding programs that exist within the provincial government. I also noted in past years—although the minister said that it was a \$15-million program being reinstated. In fact, in recent years, as much as \$25 million was spent on the Connecting Link Program. So we'll reserve our final judgment on whether or not the government is keeping its commitment, and obviously bring forward the concerns of our constituents in this Legislature as this goes forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I've had the opportunity to learn many new things since being elected. Every time I speak on behalf of my constituents, I ensure that I have done my homework. I want to be sure that their voices are heard in this Legislature. I also want to know all that I can about issues that affect the province. So here I stand to discuss the budget and to fight to keep hydro public.

The teacher in me cannot resist the opportunity to shed a bit of light on the proud history of public hydro and electricity. Since we are literally standing here on the verge of a new government-induced dark age—literally—our province is on the brink of a time that families and businesses won't be able to afford to keep their lights on. Since that is the case, let me share a bit about public power so we can fully appreciate it for the next few weeks that we still have it.

I'd like to share an article from the Dictionary of Canadian Biography on Sir Adam Beck. But before I do that, I'll flash forward. Sir Adam Beck fought for public hydro. He was knighted because he championed good ideas for the people. In fact, a statue was erected in his honour; a bronze monument of Sir Adam Beck is not far from here. Schools have been named in his memory—schools that soon might not be able to pay for their elec-

tricity and, like so many others, might have to close when costs skyrocket and funding evaporates. But I digress.

I'll read part of an article researched and written by H.V. Nelles. "The Prometheus of Canadian politics during the first quarter of the 20th century, Sir Adam Beck, brought the inestimable benefit of cheap electric light and power to the citizens of Ontario through a publicly owned utility, the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. He had to fight continuously to build Hydro, as it came to be called, but supported by municipal allies he succeeded in creating one of the largest publicly owned integrated electric systems in the world.... Adam Beck more than any other public figure in Ontario reshaped the institutional life of the province by making electricity a public utility and legitimizing, through his accomplishments, public ownership as an effective instrument of policy throughout Canada."

Beck is quoted as insisting that, "It is the duty of the government to see that development is not hindered by permitting a handful of people to enrich themselves out of these treasures at the expense of the general public." What a great thought. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read it again: "It is the duty of the government to see that development is not hindered by permitting a handful of people to enrich themselves out of these treasures at the expense of the general public." Continuing from the article, Beck "extolled the power of abundant cheap light to brighten the homes of working people; cheap electricity would create more jobs in the factories of the province; hydro would lighten the drudgery of the barn and the household; and electric railways radiating out from the cities into the countryside would create more prosperous, progressive farms even as light and power made brighter, cleaner cities."

In 1914, just more than 100 years ago, he received a knighthood. Here we are, 100 years later, rush-debating—probably in six and a half hours—so that this majority government can tear public hydro down and sell it for parts to some backroom money crowd. When I realized that the Premier of our province in just a few weeks will have sold affordable public power without the understanding or support of the people of this province, all the while knowing it is a despicable thing to do—it turns my stomach. The Premier of this province and leader of the government of Ontario is actually undertaking to punch the lights out of the middle class and the business community and to make sure that our struggling economy can now look forward to struggling in the dark. She is ensuring that small businesses will always stay small and won't be able to pay their bills. Wynne's money crowd wants to make a quick buck while the rest of us pay the price.

Just to review, Sir Adam Beck wanted to "brighten the homes of working people"; Premier Kathleen Wynne wants to ensure higher rates for families who are already paying the highest bills in Canada. Sir Adam Beck knew that "cheap electricity would create more jobs in the factories of the province"; Premier Kathleen Wynne wants to ensure that companies like General Motors pay

more and more to do business here and is undermining the goal of strengthening opportunities for growth in manufacturing. Sir Adam Beck knew that “hydro would lighten the drudgery of the barn and the household”; Premier Kathleen Wynne doesn’t seem to care that constituents across this province already can scarcely afford to heat their homes or use their appliances, and now she might expect them to ration their electric light usage. She wants us back in the dark ages. This government likes to keep Ontarians in the dark, and now she wants Ontarians to live in the dark. If you think I’m being dramatic, which might happen, I will put you in touch with my constituents who are still trying to pay bills from two winters ago—people who live in a basement apartment and only have one baseboard heater that they have to ration use of so they can afford to eat. And that’s just because of deregulation since 1999. What on earth are they going to do once their rates jump another 20% or so?

Sir Adam Beck proposed that “electric railways radiating out from the cities into the countryside would create more prosperous, progressive farms” while “light and power made brighter, cleaner cities.”

0940

But Premier Kathleen Wynne just celebrated a diesel train and has pretended that the point of selling off revenue-generating assets was to invest in transit. They’re sneak-selling a revenue-generating asset that puts money into our provincial health care, into our provincial education, into communities across the province to put 3% of what’s been promised into the Toronto pot for Toronto transit. I begrudge Toronto nothing, but 3% at the expense of every business and household across the province? Who came up with this plan?

The Liberals across from us seem surprised by the little details that we’ve been bringing forward from Bill 91. Who wrote this bill? The Minister of Finance doesn’t seem to have read the fine print. Maybe things are different on that side, but over here when we write a bill, we’re involved in the process. I’ve got a private member’s bill coming up and I know what’s in it, because that’s my job. My name is going to be on it. It is intending to make something better, to fix something. Bill 91 is tearing apart our public power and making a mockery of our democratic process. Shame on this Premier and shame on the Liberal caucus that isn’t standing up to her and isn’t standing up for their constituents.

To finish the story of Sir Adam Beck and to again quote from the article, “He worried on his deathbed that political partisanship would overcome it and that Hydro as an independent entity would not survive. But in his absence it continued to flourish, firmly rooted in the towns and cities, along the back concessions and amongst the merchants, workers, farmers and homemakers of the province. Hydroelectricity generated and delivered by a crown corporation to municipally owned utilities at the lowest cost had become an Ontario institution that would outlive changing governments and passing ideologies”—until now; until Premier Kathleen Wynne; until 2015,

when this short-sighted Liberal government plans to pull the plug on public power.

New Democrats have invited Ontarians to fight against the sale of Hydro One and, Mr. Speaker, you can too if you go to [www.youpaytheprice.ca](http://www.youpaytheprice.ca). We are also holding town halls and meetings across the province. Since you weren’t able to make it to our round table in Oshawa, I’ll be happy to tell you about it.

Andrea Horwath and I hosted a round table discussion to hear from local voices about the sale of hydro. We are fortunate to have a very active local coalition called Keep Hydro Public and I am pleased to read to you from their presentation:

“Keep Hydro Public is a group of concerned Oshawa citizens. We are not opposed to transit and infrastructure, and realize that every budget has plums and barbs, but the sell-off of Hydro One is a barb, will raise hydro rates and have a direct impact on manufacturing jobs all across Ontario and we believe it will be difficult to retain the jobs we presently have. Wasteful spending scandals on eHealth, Ornge, gas plants, software glitches etc. could have paid for transit and infrastructure without selling Hydro One.”

Also at that meeting were teachers who recognize the damage that even less funding, as a result of less revenue, would do and how it would impact our education system and students. At the meeting were community members who can’t understand why this government won’t listen to anyone. At the meeting were electricians who were concerned about what privatizing and lack of oversight will mean in terms of safety standards and certifications. Electricity isn’t a game. This is serious. Again, it’s clear that this government is making a rash, short-sighted decision where communities will be paying the price.

Oshawa, like cities across the province, is concerned about what this sell-off will mean. This isn’t partisan; this is a provincial concern.

I would like to share the front page of Business Matters, which is a regular publication in my community from the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce. The headline is “Budgets 2015: Business Drowning in Energy Debt and No GO for Durham.” I’ll read excerpts from it to share the voice of businesses on this issue:

“With the Ontario budget just completed, the Ontario chamber and the chamber network are concerned about the government’s decisions that are negatively impacting business ... undermining the capacity of businesses to grow and create jobs in Ontario.

“The Ontario Energy Board recently announced that starting May 1 rates will go up by \$5.71 per month for an average Ontario household. However, this hydro rate increase has far greater significance for businesses. Increases will range between 7% and 15% per kilowatt hour, impacting, for example, restaurants, fast food outlets and small industry that operate during on-peak and mid-peak times.... This takes on much greater significance given the backdrop of an impending partial sale of Hydro One.”

The chamber goes on, Mr. Speaker: “‘Budget 2015 does little to address business’ concerns over rising elec-



tricity rates,' stated Bob Malcolmson, CEO of the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, 'and according to the most recent Ontario Chamber survey, rising electricity prices are the number one factor hurting business competitiveness. Last year alone 2,700 companies left Ontario.'"

Just this past week it was announced that 1,000 jobs at GM will be gone. That's 1,000 good-paying jobs just gone. In the auto industry, one job in manufacturing has seven to 10 spin-off jobs in the connected industry. That's a lot of workers. Those are a lot of families. Those are a lot of connected businesses. On the heels of that announcement, this government is ramming through this legislation with no one wanting them to do it; ramming through legislation to increase the cost of electricity and the cost of doing business in Ontario. How can businesses exist when they can't predict the rising costs or afford to pay them? Who is driving this runaway train?

Speaker, I wonder, through you to the Premier, what hydro experts they have talked to on this issue. What do you even know about hydro? What's required to build and maintain an efficient hydro system? What do you understand about generation, transmission and distribution systems? Who is your expert, and what do they know about it? Ed Clark is a banker, so who is your hydro expert? Who is advising you? You don't know what you're selling and why you are selling it. If you haven't talked to a hydro expert then you don't know what you're doing.

Paul Kahnert worked in the industry for 33 years. He knows hydro. I'm glad to be able to share parts of a recent article that he wrote for the Hamilton Spectator. Paul worked in the industry, as I said, for 33 years and was spokesperson for the Ontario Electricity Coalition from 2001 to 2010, which campaigned against hydro privatization across the province and stopped the sale of Hydro One in court in the spring of 2002.

The title of the article was "Wynne's Sale of Hydro One Is a Betrayal of the Public Interest." From the article: "If you're driving your car and the steering wheel comes off in your hands, do you step on the gas or step on the brakes? Hydro rates are out of control in Ontario and with the proposed sale of Hydro One, Kathleen Wynne is stepping on the gas....

"Where is the demand coming from? There are no public demonstrations outside Queen's Park demanding that Hydro One be sold. The demand is coming from Bay Street and the investment community. Wynne is also looking for a quick fix for Ontario's deficit.

"There is no such thing as free money. There are permanent consequences from privatization.

"Giving up forever all future revenue (now \$1 billion a year) for a one-time cash payment for Hydro One is not a very wise thing to do."

He continues, "Wynne is promising that all money from the sale will go towards transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure lasts 40 to 50 years and then needs to be rebuilt again. The problem with selling public assets is that you can only sell them once. We said 14 years ago

that it's like burning your furniture to heat your home. What do you burn next? ....

"The private sector does a fabulous job of manufacturing transformers, insulators, wire, relays, switches, connectors and all the materials we need to build our electrical system but they do a poor job of running hydro in the public interest. They can't. Their fiduciary duty legally requires them to maximize profits for their shareholder. Now, more than \$1 billion a year now goes out of the province in private power profits. That money used to go out to businesses and citizens in the form of low and stable rates.

"Politicians did not sell Ontario Hydro during the depths of the Great Depression nor during the height of the Second World War. Those economic times were far worse than what we face now. Those politicians wisely kept hydro to create jobs and to help the economy recover from those lean times.

"The world's climate is in trouble. Now, more than ever, it is critical that governments have the levers of public ownership to curb global warming and institute real conservation programs.

"The hydro privatization experiment has failed in Ontario. In fact, there is not one jurisdiction anywhere in the world where privatization hasn't resulted in big rate hikes. The promise of deregulation was 'lower rates.' The promise of smart meters was that 'smart meters will save you money.' Both promises were completely false."

He continues, if can you imagine: "Kathleen Wynne needs to scrap the idea of selling Hydro One and put the brakes on hydro deregulation and privatization. It's in the public interest, both for the economy and environment.

0950

"It's important to note that during the provincial election on September 5, 2003, McGuinty, low in the polls, took the main campaign plank from the NDP and promised 'public power.' Closing the phony IESO electricity market and regulating rates would be a good start on that promise.

"Let's remember that Sir Adam Beck, a Tory, backed by business, after a 10-year campaign and 18 municipal referendums, brought public power to Ontario in 1905. For 95 years, Ontario grew and prospered under public power. On his deathbed, Sir Adam Beck said, 'I wish I could have lived long enough to build a band of iron around Hydro, to keep it safe from the politicians.' He might have added, 'And safe from the profiteers.'" I'm pleased to be able to share these words from Paul Kahnert, who remembers because he'd gone through this back in 2002. And back in 2002, Judge Gans ruled on April 19 that the provincial government did not have the right to sell Hydro One and that it belonged to the people of Ontario.

Ernie Eves didn't like that, so in June 2002 Eves passed Bill 58, which gave the Tory government the legal ability to sell Hydro One. But they didn't dare sell it because the Star poll of the day said that 94% of Ontarians didn't want it. What a startling thought: The government of the day listening to the people of the province. But

here we are with this government, on this day, determined to put us back 100 years. Is this a Liberal plan or is this a Kathleen Wynne initiative? I don't know.

On September 5, 2003, then-Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty said in an exclusive interview with the Toronto Sun's editorial board, "Deregulation and privatization hasn't worked and we can't go back there. I've drawn a lesson from that. Number one, we've got to keep hydro public."

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Right?

Who is driving this? Premier Wynne, you don't have the moral authority. The legal authority you are borrowing from Tory legislation. You don't have a mandate. You haven't consulted the owners: the people of Ontario. Have you really thought this through? Do you have any clue of the damage you are doing? Do you care? You are going to get rid of 10 or 20 years of profit and you are selling the future out from under our kids. And somehow, you're defending that decision.

I would also ask you, on a point of interest: What are you going to do with the statue—are you going to bury that too—of Sir Adam Beck, or are we going to melt that down for the bronze and sell it off?

This government says it is accountable and transparent. Transparent? The only thing that is clear is that this Premier and her blind followers don't know right from wrong.

This is an historic turning point. This government is flipping the switch on opportunity and growth in the province. Ontarians will pay the price now and for generations to come. This government, though, if they don't stop for sober second thought, is going to have to live with doing this to Ontario. Selling public power is an awful thing to do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** It's a privilege to speak to this bill, the budget bill. I have to say that I'm a little dismayed and disappointed at the misinformation that was being presented and disguised as debate from the member opposite. I'm just wondering: What part of our proposal does the member opposite not understand? Is it the part that says that the Ontario Energy Board will continue to set prices? Is it the part that says that Hydro One will continue to be regulated, with the Ontario government as the largest shareholder? Is it the part that says that the Ontario government will have a veto on all key decisions; the part that allows us, in part because of this transaction, to build the LRT in Mississauga; or the electrification of the GO train that is going to allow 15-minute service on so many GO corridors and two-way, all-day service? Is it the 100,000 jobs that our infrastructure plan is going to create every year? Is it the Eglinton Crosstown LRT that she doesn't understand? Is it the Sheppard East LRT that she doesn't support? Is it the Finch West LRT that she doesn't support? I just fail to understand: What part of the plan does she have issue with? Are these not good initiatives? Is it the structuring

of the way we are going to broaden the shareholding base of Hydro One that she doesn't understand? I'm just surprised at some of the rhetoric I heard because it seems to either stem from a wilful desire to not understand the proposal, or perhaps she just hasn't understood the proposal.

She went on to say that on their side of the House, they actually read that which they write and they actually read that which is written, so I would ask her to go back and reread the budget bill. I would ask her to back and reread the proposal that we have put forward for Hydro One.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm happy to rise today to provide some feedback on the Liberal budget. I'd actually like to congratulate to the member from Oshawa, who obviously did a lot of homework and research for her remarks this morning. Also, I'm happy to follow the Associate Minister of Health.

I think our PC finance critic yesterday, the member from Nipissing, had the best line of the day when it came to the Liberal budget, and that is that the Liberals need to start paying with a debit card versus a credit card.

We all know that there is a fiscal crisis in this province. We're seeing in this budget that it is clearly a typical tax-and-spend Liberal budget. In fact, I just read in one of the media reports this morning that there's \$2 billion in extra taxes and fees in this budget. Of course, this allows the Liberals to continue with some of their wasteful spending in Ontario.

Speaking of the spending side, we're seeing this government continually increase by billions and billions of dollars the spending side of the budget, and long-term, it's devastating for the province of Ontario. I often speak about the parents out there who have kids, and we're just passing this burden on to the next generation. That's the greatest injustice of the Kathleen Wynne Liberal government: to pass the burden to the next generation of Ontarians.

It's the responsibility of this Legislature to deal with the crisis that's in front of us. To see Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals continually tax and spend and make life tougher for the next generation is the greatest injustice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I was enjoying the comments from the member from Oshawa this morning. As I was reading my mail—this is from a constituent up in Elliot Lake. I don't have their permission to read out their name yet, but I will read their views. It says:

"Dear Premier" Kathleen Wynne:

"My wife and I are viewing with alarm the media reports of your plans to sell off ... hydro, or at least a major portion of it, to private investors. We are aware that in the last election you scored a victory at the polls and received a majority in the Legislature. However, having viewed your election platform when you were running for office, we were well aware of your plans once you formed a government. Nowhere in your platform was there a mention of selling" Hydro One.



They go on to say, "It is our opinion that this is why you did not make the sale of hydro part of your election platform, and it is furthermore our opinion that not having done so, your mandate does not address its sale. If you insist on acting on this proposal, you should hold a referendum on the matter. We also expect that this will not happen because you are well aware that Ontario voters are very much against such a plan...."

"If you insist on carrying out such folly, selling such a valuable asset to build rapid transit that will forever require a large subsidy to continue operating, and having sold a revenue-generating asset to build it, where will the subsidy come from? ....

"Please scrap this foolish and unpopular idea and come up with a better plan. Another Liberal administration after that disastrous one of Dalton McGuinty's would be too much to bear."

These are from constituents of mine who I saw over the weekend. That was the resounding response that I got at the Elliot Lake Trade Show this weekend, where I got thousands of signatures, trying to steer this government in order to get away from their wrong-headed idea.

1000

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** It's an honour to speak today to the budget. I have to say that I'm incredibly proud of this budget. I'm incredibly proud of our Premier and the work that this government has been doing. It's easy to find fault in things; it's not always easy to find solutions. I think the Premier and this government have worked very hard to find solutions to some of the challenges they face, but to seize the opportunities for the future. This is a budget that thinks about the short term, but also one that thinks about the long term.

There's just a few things that I want to highlight in the budget to add to what the minister was saying earlier. On jobs and the economy: In this budget, you have the introduction of the Canada-Ontario Job Grant, covering "two-thirds of total eligible training costs" with "flexibility for small employers"—supporting business, supporting employers. We're "renewing the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy by investing an additional \$250 million over the next two years," helping our young people access the job market and address that youth unemployment we face. We're investing \$55 million towards in-class apprenticeship training and support programs, again, helping our young people get jobs. When it comes to developing our highly-skilled work force, we're investing \$75 million to support construction of a six-storey, 260,000-square-foot learning resource commons at Humber College. This is in my community of Etobicoke. I'm incredibly proud of that. It's something that's going to enhance the opportunities for young people in the years to come. I talked about the youth jobs strategy: \$23 million towards the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund, investing in equipment, technology and space, again, helping young people get jobs. We're investing \$130 billion over 10 years in infrastructure.

Again, this is thinking about the future, not just thinking about the present. I think what this budget has done is all of this and many other things, while at the same time thinking about our fiscal future and ensuring that we're good custodians of the taxpayer dollar. That means laying out a plan to balance the budget, doing so gradually, doing so responsibly, but doing so. It is so critical and important—not just to this generations but to future generations—that we do so, so that we have the funding to provide those programs and that quality of life that we've all come to expect and enjoy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Oshawa for her final comments.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm pleased to respond to the comments of my colleagues in this House.

To the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: It actually isn't a wilful desire not to understand. It's a wilful desire to actually read what's there and not just listen to the spin and to understand that, yes, the OEB sets rates; they set a 42% increase in gas rates. You gave us a list of positives, and that's great. Where's the list of negatives? I've got one for you: no FIPPA, no Auditor General, no FAO, no freedom of information, no Ombudsman oversight and no transparency. There's a list for you. Also, I know that 60% trumps 40% every time.

To the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex: Thank you, I appreciate your comments, your attention and your shout-out for my homework.

To the member from Algoma-Manitoulin: I know that you're hearing from your constituents, and I'm pleased that you're sharing that with us. We're all hearing from our constituents. Even the Liberal members are hearing from their constituents, and I would challenge them to listen to those constituents.

To the member from Etobicoke Centre: Thank you for bringing up jobs and the economy and talking about the Youth Jobs Strategy. The people of Oshawa are very concerned about what on earth we're going to do for jobs now and what on earth we're going to do for any kind of job security in the future, especially, when we're looking at GM. We're in flux right now. We've just had that announcement. We've lost 1,000 jobs and all of those spin-off jobs in the community. Our community is going to be affected now and down the road. We don't know what will happen. Maybe we will be able to secure a GM product, and things will be fine. But if the hydro rates continue to go up and up and up and they can't plan for those expenses—they don't know what they're going to be. What business can plan when they can't predict? What business is going to feel comfortable staying in a climate when they can't afford to keep the lights on?

To your point of gradually and responsibly rolling out this budget: We're talking two weeks and then the public power is gone. That doesn't seem gradual, nor does it seem responsible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'll be sharing my time with the members from Cambridge, Kitchener Centre, and Beaches-East York.

The C.D. Howe Institute estimates—this is in a study in 2013—“the congestion cost for the greater Toronto area and Hamilton to be between \$7.5 billion”—with a B—“to \$11 billion”—with a B—“per year.” That’s what congestion costs. People stuck in traffic on the 401 and the QEW, stuck going to work every day, delivering goods and services—these are people who are contributing to the economy. If we think we’re going to pay for our hospitals and schools with an economy that loses \$7 billion to \$11 billion a year, we ain’t gonna do it. We have no choice.

The Conservatives and NDP basically have no plan. All they do is say, “Do nothing,” and somehow, magically, this congestion will disappear. This is a critical issue that is costing everybody in Ontario extra time lost, extra time to pay for gas and extra time in delivering food, products and industrial products.

These billions of dollars cost everybody, year after year. This is not a one-time cost, so building infrastructure—roads, bridges, public transit—is an imperative. We have no choice. Therefore, I wonder what their plan is to build transit or to build roads or to fix our bridges. They have none. All they say is, “We don’t like the way you’re going to do it.”

Sure, the way we’re going to do it is outlined in the budget. They’ve got, as usual, everything negative to say about Ontario, everything negative to say about the future of this province. But the future of this province is in its economy, in moving goods and services. We’ve got an amazing workforce in this province, from Cornwall to Kenora, but we can’t let this workforce go to work if we’ve got people stuck in traffic and trucks stuck in traffic every day—\$7 billion to \$11 billion a year.

What is their plan to do something? The plan is basically zero. All they say is, “Oh, we love Hydro One” all of a sudden. I’ve been sitting here for a number of years; I never heard one of them on either side ever stand up and say anything good about Hydro One in 20 years—now they love Hydro One—or the Beer Store—now they’re in love with the Beer Store.

Now, all of a sudden, every day, they’re saying, “Whoa. Isn’t Hydro One fantastic?” They stood up here, day after day, hammering it as poorly run: “It’s got to be done better. People are complaining.” The Beer Store: “We’ve got to get more competition in the Beer Store.” We finally do something, and they say, “Oh, don’t do it. We love it as it is.”

The status quo, Mr. Speaker, is not an option, because we can’t borrow any more. Maybe that’s what they want to do. Maybe we should increase borrowing.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** You can’t borrow more.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Right, so we can’t borrow.

Or maybe they say perhaps that we should increase taxes to pay for infrastructure. They basically have no way of paying to build the roads, the bridges and the public transit.

As we build the roads, the bridges and the public transit, we actually do something fantastic, and that is that we give people good-paying jobs in construction and all the supportive work that goes into construction—all the

design work, all the planning work. People actually make a good living in building infrastructure.

They don’t like that. They say, “Don’t do it. Don’t build the infrastructure. We can’t afford it. We don’t have the money. Don’t do it this way.”

We need the jobs. We need to get rid of the congestion. This budget basically makes an investment in Ontario, in its people and its future, so that we can grow the economy to provide health care, education, and help for our most vulnerable. They don’t have any idea how they would do that. They just say, “Don’t do it your way. It’s wrong.”

And what is their way? They have no way, Mr. Speaker: no plan, no idea; nothing but criticism. You’ll never hear them say one good thing about the budget. It’s impossible to find one thing. They’re negative—

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Because it’s a Liberal budget.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Exactly. They just said it. Because it’s from the Liberals, they’re against every aspect of the budget.

But the people want to get rid of congestion, and the people want jobs, and they don’t want us to just defend the old Beer Store and Hydro One and say “Oh, don’t touch these holy grails.”

They’re stuck in the past. Get with it. Get with the people who want jobs and want to get rid of congestion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I’m glad to add my voice this morning to the budget debate. I certainly welcome some of the comments from my colleague from Eglinton—Lawrence.

**1010**

One of the things that I’m really happy to see in this budget is the support that we’ve got for children and youth. I’ve spoken frequently in the House about my two appropriate-aged sons for the youth jobs strategy—I have an 18- and a 21-year-old at home—but it’s also the friends that they bring home from school and those friends who are looking forward to their future and wondering what’s out there for them. So I’m really pleased to see that we’re renewing Ontario’s Youth Jobs Strategy by investing \$250 million more over two years. That benefits the students and youth in Cambridge, in particular, and I see a great benefit so they have more options for their future.

I wanted to talk about Cambridge’s manufacturing sector. Cambridge was actually founded on manufacturing. I wanted to say that I’m really happy with the fact that our advanced manufacturing sector has grown over 4% in the last few years. It also means that our manufacturing plants need more highly skilled trades. I’ve often noted that Conestoga College in Cambridge has many skilled trades programs, and I’m really pleased to see another investment of \$13 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship programs and investing another \$19 million over the next three years to support training for apprenticeship programs. This really benefits the manufacturing plants in my city.

Investing \$23 million more over two years in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund in Cambridge is also



great news. As I've said, we've been growing manufacturing, and I've had a lot of conversations and tours of our local manufacturing companies. They are very happy not only with the investment in the highly skilled trades department and the apprenticeship programs, but they're also very pleased about the ongoing support with our Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. We have many businesses in Cambridge that have benefited from the investment from this fund, and many more that are looking to apply to this program. Recent examples are Meridian Manufacturing, Cambridge Towel, and COM DEV, to name a few. They're very happy with the ongoing support.

The Jobs and Prosperity Fund is also important to a dynamic business environment, in particular, again, in Cambridge because of our highly skilled and manufacturing plants.

Some of the recent tours that I've had in Cambridge really confirm the fact that the energy program from the Ontario Liberal government over the last few years has been key to their success. Why? Well, I toured a plant on Friday, and part of their business is making vinyl products. When there is an interruption in electricity supply, the batch is ruined, and they have a whole protocol on how to shut down the machines and make sure that they can take the molten vinyl off the lines before it gums up and interferes with their machinery. This company has been in Cambridge for over 100 years, so they remember the times in the 1990s, and again the big shutdown in their plant in 2003 when the electricity system failed in our part of the world. They really do appreciate the fact that now when they flip the switch on, the electricity system is reliable, and that they're able to continue to manufacture.

As a matter of a fact, at a recent round table, there were 19 manufacturers and businesses at that round table on economic development put on by our chamber of commerce. Business after business kept praising the fact that they do have reliable electricity, which is key to making sure that their manufacturing processes are intact. It's a real waste when they have to ruin a batch of product if the electricity fails in the meantime.

We've had a recent company invest in Cambridge because of the low corporate taxes and because of the ongoing investment in the highly skilled trades project. We welcomed Héroux-Devtek just a couple of months ago to open their doors, and they're building high-end landing gear for big aircraft. We're really happy to have them, and it's because of the ongoing support in this budget from the Jobs and Prosperity Fund and the ongoing investment in skills training.

Speaker, I'm going to stop there and allow my colleagues also to enter in, but I'm certainly very, very supportive of this budget.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Seeing as it is now 10:15, this Legislature stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to welcome the paramedics that are here from CUPE Ontario and the committee chair, Chris Day. Unfortunately, I think the breakfast was over by the time I got down there, but I know that a number of my caucus colleagues will be meeting with them today, so welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I hate to do "me too," but that's exactly where I'm going. I just want to welcome the paramedics on behalf of our leader, Andrea Horwath, and New Democrats, and specifically the chair, Chris Day, who is here today with paramedics from across the province. Welcome.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** On behalf of our Premier and the entire government of Ontario, I do want to welcome and thank all the paramedics who are here today. Thank you very much for being the first responders on pretty much every scene when it comes to injuries in our community. As we celebrate first responders week, we thank you for your sacrifice and your heroism in our community.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like, in particular with the paramedics, to introduce Patricia MacFarlane from the Perth paramedic service, and Norm Robillard from the Ottawa paramedics, whom I met with earlier. We had a great chat on the post-traumatic stress disorder issue.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Once again, I'd like to welcome the paramedics from Niagara Falls. They're here as part of CUPE Queen's Park paramedic day: Blaine Bittman, Jim Simpson, Jon Brunarski, Dave Barnett and Kyle Gemmill.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'd like to introduce to the Legislature today Miles Wu and Morgan Stahl, who are working as interns at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport this summer. Welcome.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'd like to introduce today, with the CUPE paramedics—the ambulance committee of Ontario is having a Queen's Park lobby day—from my riding of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Chris Day, who is also the acting chair of the CUPE Ambulance Committee of Ontario. Welcome to Queen's Park. I've had a chance to meet with Chris in the past and had very good discussions.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I also have a visitor all the way from Sudbury, a paramedic with the city of greater Sudbury, Mr. Bruce Welch. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to welcome Lymphoma Canada to Queen's Park today. We're also joined by two of my summer interns, Will Eberlee and Kate Dotsikas, in the members' gallery. But particularly, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the paramedics attending question period today in the public gallery. We've got representatives here representing over 5,500 paramedics and dispatchers, members of CUPE, and the committee chair is here, Chris Day.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm here on behalf of the member for Haldimand–Norfolk to introduce the family of page captain Olivia Collver: father, Mark Collver, aunt, Carolyn Wade and her grandfather, Gerald Walsh.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I just wanted to add my voice and welcome the paramedics from the great city of Toronto, in particular Leslie Bremner, who was on my radio show today on post-traumatic stress disorder and how we need it covered.

**Mr. Harinder S. Takhar:** I want to introduce the grade 10 students from St. Aloysius Gonzaga high school in my riding of Mississauga–Erindale. They are here in the building and should be in the Legislature soon, along with the staff and the volunteers. I want to welcome them.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It's hard to see from where I'm sitting, but I believe I see Pete Wright from OPSEU. I'm always glad to see him here at the Legislature. Also, I'd like to add my voice to welcome the paramedics from across Ontario. I believe I see Jeff Van Pelt from Oshawa up there, if I'm not mistaken. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** On behalf of the member for Scarborough–Guildwood and page captain Ishika Tiwari, I'd like to introduce the page's mother, Anita Tiwari, and father, Sudhir "Sid" Tiwari, who are in the public gallery this morning. Welcome.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'd like to welcome a visitor, Jozef Kowalewski, here to the Legislative Assembly today. He's here to have lunch with me.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'd like to introduce two people from the Ontario Association of Food Banks: Erin Fotheringham and Carolyn Stewart, who are with us today in the members' gallery.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I am happy to introduce my two interns, James Liles and Pierre-Olivier Gagné-Corrievau. They are starting their internship in my office this week. Bienvenue.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I would also like to acknowledge that we have the three interns who will be working in my office over the summer. We're joined here today in the gallery by Alex Cohen, Francesca Cesario and Amir Soltania.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'd like to welcome two interns who have joined my office for the summer. I think they might still be in the security lineup. Logan Byberg and Christian Pottier are joining us today for question period.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins–James Bay has given me notice of intent to raise a point of privilege. I am prepared to hear the member now.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will try not to be too long, but I just want you to know that I've filed a point of privilege not only with you, but also with the other two House leaders.

Pursuant to standing order 21(c), I gave you notice of my intent to raise a point of privilege this morning—I did that—concerning a possible breach of privilege with regard to the government's tentative deal with Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One employees, who are both represented by the Power Workers' Union.

After the recommendation of the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets, the government has been explicitly clear that it intends to privatize Hydro One, a publicly owned crown corporation. This decision was pursued and included in the budget bill presented to this Legislature on April 23, 2015. The proposal in this budget marks the most significant shift in public service delivery within the last 25 years, and the subsequent implications of the budget will resonate for at least a generation. Debate on the budget, including the sale of Hydro One laid out in it, has just begun, and the budget has not seen a minute of committee hearings.

The government has been clear that the proceeds from the sale of Hydro One will be used to invest in the province's infrastructure and transit. Yet the Globe and Mail on May 1, as well as other media outlets, have reported that the tentative deal with the power generation and Hydro One employees would include shares equivalent to 2.75% of their salaries every 15 years and 2.7% of their salaries every 12 years respectively. The government has consistently demonstrated an acute awareness of these negotiations of a tentative collective bargaining agreement with the Power Workers' Union.

I want to quote. This is a quote from Deb Matthews from the House on April 30: "We are very pleased that a tentative agreement has been reached with the Power Workers' Union. It is a net-zero deal, but it is" ours "for ratification. I'm not going to comment on a deal that actually is before the members of that union so they can make their" own "decision about ratification. I'm going to respect that process.

"But I am very, very pleased that the leadership of the Power Workers' Union has expressed support. I'm actually very excited that workers who work in Hydro One are demonstrating that they may be interested in being owners of" a partially owned utility. "I really believe when workers own part of the company they're working for, that" will make "for a stronger company."

Energy Minister Bob Chiarelli on April 30 in the Toronto Star said, "It's a win-win for both sides."

"It's a tentative 'net zero' contract. It's compliant with our policies"—and I underline "our policies."

Again, the Toronto Star, Bob Chiarelli, April 30: "The tentative settlement ... is very broad-based and deals with all of the important issues that we need to accommodate on both sides."

New Democrats maintain serious concerns about the negative long-term effects and costs of privatization of Hydro One. We are equally troubled by the government's decision to prematurely negotiate deals involving the distribution of Hydro One shares before the Legislature has approved such privatization. That really goes to the centre of what the point of privilege is all about. How can this happen, when the Legislature has not yet passed the legislation, that the government has somehow acquiesced to the ability of Hydro One to negotiate such a deal of shares with the Power Workers' Union? It seems to us that that's putting the cart before the horse, and also it's flagrantly against what the precedents are in this House.



1040

It is our assertion that this action represents a breach of privilege and constitutes a contempt of Parliament. Clearly the government has given the go-ahead for hydro to negotiate this without the authorization of this Legislature.

Information regarding the tentative deal reached by the government with Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One workers involving the distribution of shares that have yet to be approved by this assembly has been made publicly available and has been reported in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Financial Post*, the *Toronto Star*, *Metro* news and *Newstalk 1010*, amongst others. By preempting the bill's progression through the House, the government has acted in a fashion that signals that the appropriate parliamentary processes are unnecessary for the completion of any deal. Again, Mr. Speaker, this bill is still before the House. We have not passed such a bill.

In 1997, a *prima facie* ruling by Speaker Stockwell regarding a document involved with government advertising, warned as follows—if you remember, Speaker, it was related to the megacity bill. The government had put out advertising—specifically, had put out a flyer—where they were talking about what was going to happen should this legislation pass.

Stockwell had this to say: He warned that “a reader of that document could be left with an incorrect impression about how parliamentary democracy works in Ontario, an impression that undermines respect for our parliamentary institutions.”

An unassuming member of the public could infer from any of the media outlets above that the distribution of Hydro One shares by the government is a foregone conclusion and not contingent on an act of the House that has yet to occur.

Erskine May explains the concept of contempt in the following terms: “Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency”—and I say “tendency”—“directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence. It is therefore impossible to list every act which might be considered to amount to a contempt, the power to punish for such an offence being of its nature discretionary” to the Speaker.

“Indignities offered to the House by words spoken or writings published reflecting on its character or proceedings have been constantly punished by both the Lords and the Commons upon the principle that such acts tend to obstruct the Houses in the performance of their functions by diminishing the respect due to them....

“Other acts besides words spoken or writings published reflecting upon either House or its proceedings which, though they do not tend directly to obstruct or impede either House in the performance of its functions, yet have a tendency to produce this result indirectly or by bringing such House into odium, contempt or ridicule or

by lowering its authorities may constitute contempts,” according to Erskine May.

I finish on this: By negotiating the distribution of private shares of a public crown asset such as Ontario hydro before the Legislature of Ontario has approved the sale of such shares, the government undermines the authority of this House.

It is clear that the concerns of various speakers identified not only in Stockwell's 1997 ruling, but others, raises questions about the manner in which the government is negotiating the sale of Hydro One shares. It is for these reasons I hope that you rule in favour of a *prima facie* case of contempt and allow this House to investigate this matter fully.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member.

On the same point of privilege, the member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to respond. I received the letter from the House leader from the third party about an hour ago, and I did have a very casual conversation with him just prior to the introductions portion of question period.

I make no bones, Speaker. I've said in the past that I have serious concerns about this government undermining the 107 members of this Legislature, the fact that I believe on a number of occasions they've undermined the relevance of this Legislature.

I too share the concerns of the member from Timmins–James Bay about the decisions and the statements that this government has made outside of this House about the Hydro One share sale, the distribution of those shares and, in addition, statements that they've made outside of this point of privilege just on the sale of hydro, the sale of Hydro One Brampton—the feeling from the members of the public that these deals are all done. It really flies in the face of all of us and our parliamentary democracy that the government continues down this path without the debate that I believe is deserved.

I also agree with the member's statements around Speaker Stockwell's rulings about the impression that the public has that decisions have been made when there hasn't been that discussion in this House.

While Progressive Conservatives have not had ample time to be able to provide a written submission, we do share the road that this government is taking all Ontarians down in this sale. The fact is that we have a parliamentary place that deserves debate for those significant items of the public good, so we support this letter and this issue. We hope that you will rule in favour. I think the member's last comments about more investigation and more discussion—I hope that's the road you will put us on this morning, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On the same point of privilege, the government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I respectfully ask that you dismiss this point of privilege from the honourable member from Timmins–James Bay because notice was not given at the first available opportunity.

By his own admission, the honourable member from Timmins–James Bay quotes in his letter that he has known about this for at least five days. The member quotes an article from the Toronto Star dated April 30 where the Minister of Energy, Bob Chiarelli, speaks to a tentative deal. In fact, Speaker, if you look, the earliest reporting of this issue goes back to an article in the *Globe and Mail*, to March 20, 2015, and the first line of that article reads as follows: “Ontario’s two main power workers’ unions could end up owning a slice of a partially privatized Hydro One.”

Speaker, I would like to quote from your ruling of April 21, 2015, where you ruled on the timing of a point of privilege:

“Yesterday, the member from Leeds–Grenville provided me with an additional written notice of intent to raise a point of privilege, as required by standing order 21(c). The notice refers to the release last week of the report of the Premier’s Advisory Council on Government Assets, and principally about the fact the announcement took place outside the Legislative Assembly and at a time that conflicted with the day’s question period.

“I have to advise the member that I cannot accept his notice. A point of privilege must be raised at the earliest opportunity after the alleged breach has occurred. Having received the member’s notice only late last night, which relates to events that occurred four days previous, I do not believe the member has met the timeline’s requirement.”

In your ruling from April 21, you found that this point of privilege had not met the timeline’s requirement. The circumstances that we are discussing today are no different. At the very least, the member for Timmins–James Bay had the opportunity to raise this point yesterday. He chose not to do so, and on this basis alone, precedent dictates that you not accept this point of privilege.

In regard to the potential point of privilege raised by the member for Timmins–James Bay, the events in question by his own admission occurred five days previous to when the notice was given. Further, just last week, the member from Nepean–Carleton asked a question on the same issue in the assembly during question period.

Because this point of privilege was not raised at the earliest opportunity, I respectfully ask that you dismiss it. Should you choose to rule on it, I would ask, given that the notice for this motion was just received earlier today, that an opportunity be provided for us to provide a more fulsome written response by the end of today that would illustrate how the potential agreement with the Power Workers’ Union does not presume passage of the budget bill and how previous Speakers’ rulings made it clear that civil servants can take reasonable planning measures in advance of the passage of the requisite legislation.

1050

Furthermore, if a deal is eventually ratified, it would of course be contingent on the Legislature passing the budget. There has been no suggestion otherwise.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The continuance: the member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I just want to say—I don’t want to prolong this any longer than I have to, but I think there are a couple of points that need to be made.

First of all, we just started writing this up yesterday because it finally occurred to us through research. In fact, that’s where we got those quotes. I got them from the research. I saw that in an email in regard to the media stories sometime this weekend. It takes time to put that together.

The other thing is, I’ll remind this House, when it came to the decision in regard to the last time we got into this, in regard to the gas plant committee, that issue had been happening at committee for some time before it ever got to the House. So I don’t think arguing timelines is quite right.

The issue here is that when I found out, I started to put together a point of privilege. It takes a while, as you can be aware, to do some research. I asked my staff to go through the media clippings in order to find clippings that would indicate that in fact the government did support this particular initiative, and that’s what they found. That’s why they’re included in the letter. It’s not because I read them on that day. It’s because they actually did the research, and we wrote this particular point of privilege yesterday. Unfortunately, by 5 o’clock I went to your office and you were not there. I got there around 5 o’clock. I’m not chastising you, but it’s just the reality that you weren’t there. That’s why I immediately went to your office this morning to bring it in.

I also want to say, just on the last point, the issue here is that this Legislature has a function, and the function is to approve the budgetary process of the government and approve legislation. When a government decides to enact and to put into place what it is supposing to happen as a result of passage of legislation before the legislation is ever passed, I think it is an affront to this Legislature. That’s really what the crux of it is. I won’t repeat that, but I’m sure you understand why we raised this, and I ask you not to take into consideration the comments made by the government House leader.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** To be clear, I take all comments into consideration.

I’m going to reserve my ruling on this matter and will deliver it at a future date.

Also, I’m going to ask that the written submissions that have been referred to are delivered to me no later than 3 p.m. this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, we’ve been talking a lot lately about this upcoming sale of shares in Hydro One, but there’s been very little talk of your sale of Hydro One Brampton.

Ed Clark’s report states that a deal has already been reached with three private companies, yet your govern-



ment never publicly put Hydro One Brampton up for sale. You never even asked for a single competitive bid. Ontarians have no guarantee that they're getting maximum value for the sale of Hydro One Brampton.

Premier, if you're going to sell public assets, can you at least provide some evidence that it's being done properly?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Energy is going to want to comment in the supplementaries, but I just want to be clear that I believe it is very important that we work with local distribution companies in this province. I think consolidation is something that we can agree is an important thing.

The proposed merger of Enersource, Horizon, Hydro One Brampton and PowerStream will create the second-largest distributor. This merged entity would be able to deliver efficiencies and economies of scale that would translate into savings for their respective ratepayers. That is critical.

I would just also comment on the agreement that consolidation is a good thing: The PC's white paper encouraged consolidation for "stronger utilities and lower operations, maintenance, and administrative costs." They actually are onside with this.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I think you said you believed that the gas plant cancellation was going to be \$40 million.

Premier, when talking about alcohol sales, Ed Clark wrote, "We expressed the view that some degree of competition is always healthy..." yet when talking about the sale of hydro assets, he wrote, "The council believes that the province should not conduct an open auction or procurement process for Hydro One Brampton." It's a classic Liberal move: Say one thing, do another.

Premier, if Ed Clark states that competition is always healthy, why won't you allow a single competitive bid process on the sale of Hydro One Brampton?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** After considerable consultation and examining the market, the council—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Like yesterday, I'll jump quickly.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The council's report emphasized, "This option results in a strong consolidator in the GTHA at a value that was as high as could otherwise be achieved"—and they did explore the market, Mr. Speaker. This proposed merger is a unique circumstance that presented itself, and the council was of the belief that its value could not be replicated through any alternative process.

In considering what form of strategic sale or merger to pursue, the council was influenced strongly by the importance of creating a strong, stand-alone industry consolidator.

Again, their Paths to Prosperity stated—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Sure, we'll just trust you on this one like we've done in the past.

Premier, you're asking Ontarians to trust you on this deal. With your track record, that's just not good enough. That's why I wrote to the Auditor General to ask her to investigate the sale of Hydro One Brampton before you remove her ability to do so in the coming weeks, with the passing of the budget bill.

We know that you like to say you're open and transparent, so now's your chance to back that up. If you truly have nothing to hide, you will support my request to let the Auditor General, with her vast experience in the energy sector, investigate the sale of Hydro One Brampton.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Dufferin—Caledon, come to order. Yes, I said that I was going to be sharp—especially when I'm standing.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The transaction represents eight municipalities, some of whom are already consolidated in one form or another. The circumstances were extremely unique. Our government intends to proceed with the merger of Enersource, Horizon, Hydro One Brampton and PowerStream to ensure value for the province and to encourage local distribution company consolidation for the benefit of ratepayers.

They issued a white paper. They talked about trying to create circumstances for consolidation. They issued a white paper that asked to broaden the ownership of Hydro One and OPG. Now they're turning against themselves only to be critical, and have no positive options to offer in this House.

## WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, last week's auditor's report revealed the truth of the fatal impact of your decisions to sign cost-cutting, substandard contracts for winter road maintenance. And yet when asked yesterday, you tried to spin a tale suggesting that standards after your cost-cutting contracts were the same as before they were signed. You even tried to blame a previous government that you know full well had nothing to do with you lowering the bar on standards.

The auditor made it clear regarding your government's contract substituting outcome targets for previously long-held standards. Contractors were making it up as they went along. Previous requirements protecting the safety of Ontario motorists went right out the window when you introduced the new agreements.

Premier, this is on you. Admit it: Your cost-cutting contracts weren't the result of previous governments; they were about you and yours alone.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As I said yesterday, I want to thank the member from Kitchener—Conestoga for that

question; and as I said last week when the auditor released her report, I thank her and her team for the thorough review that they've conducted into the Ministry of Transportation's winter maintenance program.

As a result of the 2013 internal review that the ministry conducted on this program, we have brought forward over 105 pieces of additional equipment, 55 pieces mostly for northern Ontario and 50 pieces for southern Ontario. We brought in 20 additional area inspectors to help enhance the oversight within the program itself.

Last week's 2015 Ontario budget included additional measures that, if passed, will help us provide more anti-icing liquid through our contractors as needed, as well as additional unique spreaders for sand and salt, both for northern areas and congested urban areas.

1100

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Back to the Premier: Premier, apparently you just can't handle the truth, even after the auditor spelled it out in black and white. After years of rhetoric and doublespeak by an endless line of transportation ministers from Jim Bradley to Kathleen Wynne to Bob Chiarelli to Glen Murray, the report details a road management scheme that you passed around like a hot potato, all the while jeopardizing Ontario motorists.

Four separate ministers, and now a rookie fifth, are willing to turn their heads while contracts you signed ensured substandard maintenance on winter roads, leading to injuries and even death. You all signed these contracts. People have lost loved ones as a result. You are all implicated and yet you keep talking about a "too little, too late" review that's not even public yet.

Premier, quit the game-playing, the finger-pointing and own up to the truths the auditor has revealed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** This will be my last reminder about this today, and that is, you use member's ridings or their titles and that's it.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member for that question. As I also mentioned last week both in response directly to the auditor's report but also in response to questions that occurred here in the Legislature, amongst all of the eight recommendations and all of the background information that the auditor provided—and, by the way, the Ministry of Transportation and I, as Minister of Transportation, accept all eight of the auditor's recommendations. We'll be moving forward to make sure that we continue to provide the service that's required.

But amongst all of those recommendations, the auditor did acknowledge that the province of Ontario, for the last 13 years, has consistently ranked first or second in North America when it comes to highway safety. In fact—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:**—specifically in 2012, the only other jurisdiction in North America that had a better record than Ontario was the District of Columbia.

It doesn't mean that our work is done—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, second time.

One wrap-up sentence, please.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It doesn't mean that the work is done. That's why I said very clearly last week that I accept full responsibility for going forward. I will work with our area maintenance contractors and we will make sure the program continues to provide the service that the people of Ontario deserve.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Michael Harris:**—the 2013 report shortly.

Premier, the fact is that the auditor report only paints part of the picture. That picture becomes darker still when you consider the fatalities that continue to mark Ontario highways while government turns the other way.

Carol Milojkovich wonders if her husband, Robert, and her son Daniel would still be alive today following a fatal collision with a transport truck on February 3 on a stretch of highway near Cornwall many considered a winter trouble spot.

Premier, we have a growing death toll, lawsuits and a damning auditor's report, and instead of apologies and action these families get platitudes to future fixes.

Premier, quit saving money on the backs of Ontario motorists. Apologize, and make damn sure your winter maintenance decisions don't jeopardize the lives of—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Withdraw.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Speaker, when I spoke last week in response to the auditor's report I did say—and I'll repeat it here this morning—that every single day of the week I use Ontario's highways, as does my wife. Very often both of our young daughters are in the car with us. I know that many on all sides of this House do the exact same thing. I feel a profound sense of responsibility with respect to making sure that, going forward, we continue to bring the improvements that are required to the winter maintenance program to provide, as I said earlier, that level of service that the people of Ontario deserve.

I should also say that I have specifically written to the auditor with respect to asking her to come back in at the end of the next winter season—at the end of winter 2015–16—to provide the Ministry of Transportation, the media and the public at large with an update with respect to our progress. That's real accountability. We're going to keep working on this program, and we'll have that report next year.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier is selling off Hydro One without even asking Ontarians what they think. Instead of hearing from them as part of the budget process, she's keeping everything on lockdown here in Toronto.



Why isn't the Premier interested in hearing from people across Ontario about her decision to sell off their Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I remarked yesterday, we are having more hearings on our budget than the history of the other two parties would demonstrate. We've increased the number of days of hearings. I think the member opposite knows that people from around the province can delegate to the budget committee. They can provide information. Either in written form or in person, they can provide information.

Quite the opposite of what the member opposite is suggesting, we are interested in hearing from people on the plan that we have put forward in the budget—a plan, I might say, we ran on, and we have put into our budget. We ran on reviewing our assets.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** While the Premier won't listen to Ontarians, we know she will listen to high-priced consultants about what they think about selling Hydro One. While she has paid nearly \$7 million to high-priced consultants, she won't tell Ontarians what they gave her in terms of advice.

I think there are some other people she should be consulting with: the people who actually own Hydro One and the people who pay the bills. This might surprise the Premier, but Hydro One doesn't belong to the Liberal Party; it belongs to Ontarians.

Can the Premier explain why it is that she paid \$7 million to get advice from Bay Street consulting firms, but she won't consult with the people of Ontario about the sale of their Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Once again, let me just challenge the leader of the third party by reminding her that there has been a proposal presented to both opposition House leaders that would increase the standard for committee consideration to six days. Let's remember that when their party was in office, in 1991 and 1992 there was one day of committee hearings. Under the PCs, from 1996 to 2002—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe North will come to order; second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** In 1996, two days of hearings; in 1997, two days; in 2000, two days; in 2002, zero days of committee hearings. The fact is, we are going to be hearing from the people of Ontario.

But Mr. Speaker, to the point about having experts give us advice, it was a complicated process, and we did have—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Six days is not enough time for Ontarians to have their say on one of the biggest public policy decisions that has come through this chamber in a decade or more. It is not right, Speaker. It is wrong. She is treating the sell-off of Hydro One like it is

a done deal; that's what the point of privilege was about this morning.

To those of you on the backbenches, you just have to remember this: It is you who is going to have to go to your constituents and explain why your Premier is putting this through the Legislature without talking—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. The Minister of Economic Development.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not now, member from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

As part of the convention, if comments and questions are put to the Speaker, we tend not to have this.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's not just me saying this. Almost 25,000 Ontarians have sent a message to the Premier through our website. Even Liberal riding activists are launching campaigns to stop their very own Premier from this wrong-headed decision.

Can she explain to Ontario families why it is that she will not take the time to listen to them and give them the respect they deserve?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I will say to the leader of the third party and to the people of Ontario is that we—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

1110

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —are very interested in their comments. I am very interested in hearing from them, as we did in pre-budget hearings around the province. I'm very interested in hearing their responses on the budget, which is why we have increased the number of days that we would like to have post-budget hearings.

But a couple of things that the leader of the third party has said are very indicative of what she's trying to do at this moment. The fact is, on this side of the House, we have had very clear discussions in the leadup to the budget about what was in that budget. We are a team that has taken this budget to the people of the province. It may be that the way the third party works is that it's a one-woman show. That's not how it works over here. We actually have a combined approach that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Start the clock. New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier. The Premier says that selling Hydro One is the only way to pay for transit and infrastructure, but she's just given away the very first shares in Hydro One, and it won't put a nickel into infrastructure or transit. The Pre-

mier says that selling off Hydro One is the only way. New Democrats say it is the wrong way.

The Premier does have other options but she refuses to look at them: things like corporate taxes, things like closing HST loopholes or keeping the billions of dollars—*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

The Minister of Energy, come to order; the Minister of Economic Development, the member from Trinity–Spadina.

I'm catching up. You can laugh all you want. I do know who is.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** —or keeping the billions of dollars in long-term, stable revenue that Hydro One brings to fund all of our services here in this province.

The Premier says selling Hydro One is the only choice, but she is glossing over the fact that it will pay for only 3% of her \$130 billion in promises.

Will the Premier explain why it is she's ramming through a plan to sell Hydro One, a plan that isn't needed for transit and infrastructure but does leave families paying the price?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let's just be clear that what the leader of the third party wants to do now is once again block the implementation of a budget that would build new transit, that would continue to reduce auto rates, that would continue to implement an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. She's not interested in doing any of those things.

She's not putting a plan forward for how she would make the investments in infrastructure—\$130 billion over 10 years—and she knows perfectly well that in order to make that investment, there are a number of things that we have to do. She knows perfectly well that we have allocated HST and gas tax to put towards those investments. She knows perfectly well that the opening of ownership of Hydro One is only one part of that plan, and it is a plan to make investments that she is apparently not interested in making.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier does not have a mandate to sell Hydro One, and that is the bottom line. She does not have a good reason to sell Hydro One. Sure, it will make a handful of high-paid consultants, Bay Street bankers and Liberal insiders very, very rich, but it will leave families—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** —paying higher bills for generations to come. The Premier didn't give people a say on this during the election because no matter how hard she protests, she didn't run on it and everybody knows it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There is some back and forth going on while a question is being put by members of that side, and there are members, while the answer is being put, dialoguing and trying to egg each other

on. I get it. I hope you get it that it's not supposed to happen.

Did you wrap up? Please.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** No matter how hard she protests, she knows darn well she did not run on this plan. Everybody knows it. Now she's ramming it through the House.

Why is the Premier ramming through a plan that's bad for Ontarians without even asking them what they think?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would say to the leader of the third party: What is it about making investments in this province to the tune of \$130 billion for the next 10 years, investing in transit and transportation infrastructure, and by that I mean roads and bridges, across this province—why is it that she does not see that this is necessary to the economic health and well-being of this province?

We ran on this. We said we were going to make those investments and we said that part of our plan was to review the assets that were owned by the people of Ontario and make sure that we could leverage them to have the ability to invest in the infrastructure and the assets that are needed for the 21st century. We ran on that. She ran on that. We are implementing the plan that we ran on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What is it about actually getting a mandate from the people in a democracy that this Premier does not understand? The Premier did not get a mandate to sell off Hydro One. That is the truth—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. There are a few people who are on two.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** And the sad thing is, now that she has an opportunity to get input through the committee process, instead she's going to ram it through the House. She is not interested in what people have to say. Instead, she is pushing for a privatization agenda that is worse than what we saw with Ernie Eves and Mike Harris.

Will the Premier stop listening to bankers, stop listening—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Will the Premier stop listening to bankers, stop listening to high-paid consultants, stop listening to Liberal insiders and start listening to the people of Ontario and give them a chance to have their say and put a stop to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just remind the leader of the third party of the text of our 2014 budget: "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario



Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.”

We said in our 2014 platform: “Our Moving Ontario Forward plan includes a balanced and responsible approach to paying for these investments. The funds will be dedicated from sources of revenue.” Asset optimization we pegged at \$3.15 billion or 10.9%. That’s what we ran on.

But underlying that was a plan to make the investments that we know are needed in this province that will allow this economy to grow. She doesn’t want to talk to experts. The leader of the third party is not interested in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question?

### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. We have known for over a year that your ministry has been gearing up for a strike. You started building strike accommodations 10 months before the corrections contracts had even ended, a clear sign that you aren’t planning to bargain in good faith.

This past week, we learned that those buildings cost \$5.8 million. For a government that is selling everything they can to pay their debts, that money could have gone a long way elsewhere.

Almost every ministry is slashing front-line services. Minister, bargain in good faith. Wouldn’t that \$5.8 million have been better spent on correctional front-line services?

1120

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member opposite for asking the question. I am sure, also, that the member opposite knows that when it comes to matters dealing with collective bargaining, it would be highly inappropriate for anybody in this House to speak to that.

I think that we on this side of the House firmly believe that the best place for bargaining to take place is at the table between our labour partners and management, and I really urge the member that we should not interfere in that bargaining process. I have the utmost respect for the process. I know that negotiations are ongoing, and I will not interfere in those negotiations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Well, Minister, I’m not so certain that I really got an answer to this.

That \$5.8 million was spent 10 months before contracts even ended. Meanwhile, you allowed new superjails in Toronto and Windsor to operate for a year without infirmaries, while facilities like the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre are overcrowded and understaffed.

This is inexcusable, yet you would rather pour—  
*Interruption.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I would ask that the crowd not engage in any activities that

are disruptive to the House. Sergeant-at-Arms—okay? Thank you.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Thank you, Speaker.

So we were talking about operating for a year without infirmaries, while facilities like the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre are overcrowded and understaffed. It’s inexcusable, yet you would rather pour millions into preparing for a strike that may not happen.

Maybe you had the foresight that students across the province would be out of the classroom because your colleague refuses to negotiate; the foresight that correctional institutions would strike next. Clearly, Minister, you have no hope of getting a deal done.

Minister, is that \$5.8 million part of your net-zero deals or—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Again, I would restate that we respect the collective bargaining process, and we let the bargaining take place at the table between our labour partners and management. I think that it’s not appropriate for any member to engage in that process here in the House.

Also, I want to note the fact that our number one priority is the health and safety of our correctional staff and of the inmates. When you are engaged in collective bargaining and dealing with places like our correctional institutions, it would be highly irresponsible for any government not to engage in some planning ahead of time, to ensure that the health and safety of all correctional staff and inmates is protected at all times.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier hasn’t even passed her budget bill yet, but she’s already handing away shares of Hydro One worth tens of millions of dollars a year and hundreds of millions of dollars over the lifetime of that deal, all without ever asking Ontarians.

The Premier promised that all the money from Hydro One would go to transit and infrastructure, but those hundreds of millions of dollars that the Premier is giving away won’t build any bridges, won’t pave any roads, won’t dig any subway tunnels—and she’s doing it all before a budget has even been passed.

Does the Premier think that her decisions trump the will of the Legislature?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The critic for the NDP knows, in fact, that there is a tentative agreement, and that we cannot discuss or disclose those details until there has been a ratification vote.

But it’s time. The GTA has the worst congestion of any municipal area in the world. The city of Hamilton needs funding for its rapid transit. Rural communities have been asking to expand natural gas. The proceeds of sharing ownership of Hydro One will be invested in

infrastructure, and in that process, we're respecting the interests of the ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, they have no plan of any nature or kind, other than—they admitted today—that they are going to tax to pay for infrastructure. We'll tell the province that they are going to tax for infrastructure. We are going to repurpose our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Quite a performance.

Selling Hydro One is the wrong decision. It means that bills will go up and that families will pay the price. Handing away shares will cost hundreds of millions of dollars over the lifetime of the Premier's scheme. That's hundreds of millions of dollars not going to transit or infrastructure that the minister just spoke about. The Premier is handing away hundreds of millions of dollars in Hydro One shares before the budget has even been passed.

Can the Premier explain why she doesn't seem to care about what people have to say or even waiting until the budget has been to committee, let alone passed?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The opposition continues to say that the ratepayer will pay. We just heard that again. The member knows that the Ontario Energy Board approves all prices that consumers will pay. In fact, there is a record before us, over the last six or seven years, where the Ontario Energy Board has in fact reduced requests from the existing Hydro One, from Ontario Power Generation—reduced them or, in fact, given them less than they've asked for. It is a process that was established and that was used by all previous governments. They'll continue to be in place for this Hydro One and the next Hydro One, and OPG and everybody else who applies for rate increases.

They refuse to accept that. They continue to say that it's going to raise prices for the ratepayers. It's not true; it's bull.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member will withdraw.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Withdraw, Speaker.

## MIDWIFERY

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Yesterday my sister, Meelena, gave birth to a daughter. Mother and daughter are healthy—and my brother-in-law, Joel. My parents, Don and Myroslava, are thrilled to be grandparents.

Having seen what my sister has gone through over the past nine months, I know how important it is that women have the support that they need to ensure that they and their children are healthy. Very appropriately, today marks International Day of the Midwife. It's a day to celebrate midwifery and reflect on the importance of midwives' work to support the health of women and babies around the world.

Here in Ontario, women and families have embraced midwifery since it was regulated in 1994, and the profes-

sion is growing in response to that demand. This spring, we will see the largest ever class of graduates from the Midwifery Education Program. There are about 760 registered midwives and 30 aboriginal midwives.

Minister, what is our government doing to support the important work being done by midwives across Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Today is International Day of the Midwife, and I want to take this opportunity to thank Ontario's more than 700 midwives practising in 100 clinics throughout the province for the incredible work that you do as a vital part of Ontario's health care team.

But today, I want to specifically thank Katrina Kilroy, Sarah Knox and Tiffany Haidon, the three midwives from the Midwives Collective of Toronto, who were responsible for bringing my son, Rhys, who will be 10 in a week's time, into this world. You see, my wife, Sam, and I—both of us being medical doctors—decided to have a home birth, one of the truly best decisions we have ever made. Of course, with two midwives attending our son's birth, I was relegated to the role of coach and water bearer, and calming the family dog, who was quite upset at the whole commotion. The sheer joy of being able to deliver Rhys at home in a familiar environment and bring him into this world, guided by the professionalism and compassion of talented midwives, is something we will never forget.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Thank you, Minister. I'm happy to hear about the great investments our government is making in midwifery in Ontario. I know that midwifery services are offered at 71 hospitals in Ontario, and birthing centres were launched in both Toronto and Ottawa recently. Our government has taken great steps in advancing midwifery in Ontario, but I know also that there is more work to be done. Our government continues to transform our health care system in the province, and I know this transformation is a key element of the 2015 budget.

Minister, could you talk about the 2015 budget commitments and the future investment in midwives in Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Ontario became the first jurisdiction in Canada to regulate midwifery. Since that time, Ontario's midwives have attended more than 180,000 births, including 35,000 home births. Since our government came into office in 2003, funding for the midwifery program has increased more than fivefold, from \$21 million to \$134 million in the last fiscal year. These investments have led to the doubling of the number of midwives in the province. Ontario has the majority of registered midwives in all of Canada.

1130

But the member from Etobicoke Centre is right: There is more work to be done. Together, working with the Association of Ontario Midwives, our government will be expanding our support to grow the number of aboriginal midwives in Ontario. We're serious about this commitment. We referenced it in the budget, and we look forward to launching this important program in the coming months.



I'd like to once again thank our midwives for all of their hard work and dedication to Ontario families.

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question today is for the Minister of Education. Minister, you have 72,000 secondary school students out of the classroom right this minute. Your two-tiered, train wreck, Bill 122 bargaining is simply not working. We have chatted with both sides, and they say there is simply nothing to bargain with.

Minister, it is really time for you to get serious. You have a responsibility to the students and to their parents. You have to show leadership and make sure those students get to attend their proms, their field trips, their sports competitions and, above all, their graduation ceremonies.

Minister, time is running out. What are your plans to get serious about this mess, a mess that has been created by 12 years of Liberal mismanagement?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I just want to repeat that, of course, we know that we need to reach a negotiated settlement, and we remain quite willing to be at the table and to do just that.

But the member asked a question about what we are doing to support the students whose teachers are on strike. In fact, one of the concerns that we had was around the highest-needs, very vulnerable special-education children. So that the kids would have supports in place from agencies on March break and summer holidays and—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Dufferin—Caledon, second time.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —we've been working very carefully with MCYS, with Minister MacCharles and with the agencies that support her in each of the three areas where there's a strike to make sure that the highest-needs, most vulnerable students have that support in place during the strike.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville will come to order.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I asked you to get serious. Minister, next Monday, Halton, Lakehead, Ottawa and Waterloo boards will likely all be out as well. That's another 51,000 students who will not be in the classroom because of your Bill 122; we call it the two-tiered train wreck of a bargaining system.

On top of that, we know that it's highly unlikely that 817,000 elementary students will be impacted negatively, beginning next Monday. This is a total of 950,000 students. The system is in turmoil, and it's broken. Your ministry has no one to blame except yourself for this mess.

Minister, when are you going to step up, show leadership and make sure our students are receiving the education they paid for and that they deserve?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Just going back to what we are doing to support students, because that was the original question, my ministry has been working very carefully with Minister Moridi's ministry, TCU, and with the university and college application centres. In all the boards where kids are out because of a strike, before the strike, the interim marks were submitted. The application process is going on.

Of course we want our kids back in school, and we will work very hard at the bargaining table to make that happen. But I'm not taking any lessons from the people who said they would get rid of 22,700 education workers.

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Premier. Secondary educators in Peel, Rainbow and Durham school districts are now on strike. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario's members are poised to begin their job action on Monday. Meanwhile, the Premier and the Minister of Education have flip-flopped on their commitment to cap class sizes. I don't understand why the Minister of Education is perplexed about why job action is happening.

Will the Premier admit that this government's reckless cuts are making a mess of our education system?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think we need a little bit of clarity here: The caps that she's talking about, the class size caps, are in fact contained in the local collective agreements. That isn't what we would necessarily be talking about at the central table. The issue is around the local caps that are in local collective agreements.

I must say, as somebody who was a trustee for years and years and years and who actually has sat on a staffing allocation committee at secondary, caps often apply in the case of tech classes; they often apply in the cases of other courses where there's health and safety, where there's an issue in a science lab around the maximum number of seats in a lab. There are lots of caps that are very, very helpful, and I support those.

What isn't very helpful is when—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The fact is that you're actually increasing those caps.

We know that central talks have broken down with secondary teachers, forcing tens of thousands of students out of schools. The minister has repeated over and over that these are local issues. We've also heard that she admits that she bears the responsibility of the central negotiating table. Some 73,000 elementary teachers will be in a legal strike position on Monday, affecting over 800,000 students across the province who are worried that they're going to lose their school year. It's clear that it's not just a local issue, Minister.

Will the Premier stop dodging the responsibility and admit that Liberals are throwing schools into chaos, forcing students, teachers and parents to pay the price?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm always fascinated to learn from the opposition what apparently it is that I'm trying to negotiate. It's really quite interesting to find out what it is that I am or am not doing.

But what I do want to say is that obviously we are quite concerned about the situation with the elementary teachers. Once again, we understand that we need to get back to the bargaining table. We need to negotiate a settlement because we too want to avoid strikes.

### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. This week marks North American Occupational Safety and Health Week. It also happens to be the time of year when many young Ontarians go out and get their first job and work over the summer.

In my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, hundreds of Humber College students are completing their semester and they're eager to go out and start their summer job working in retail, in restaurants, on construction sites—wherever they've found employment—and get that first paycheque.

These new and young workers are often inexperienced and they're very eager to please their employers and get that paycheque in their hands. However, it's troubling that statistics show that young people are three times more likely to be injured in the first three months on the job than their more experienced colleagues.

Through you to the minister, what can we do to ensure that our youngest and least-experienced Ontarians are safe at work?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore for what I think is an excellent question. We're always saddened in this House when we hear about workplace injuries and fatalities. Our sincere condolences go out to those families that have been affected in this way. Most often the sad part is that these incidents that lead to the injury or the death are preventable or avoidable. It's something we need to do something about.

We launched our annual new and young worker health and safety blitz earlier this month to ensure that employers in this province and new employees alike understand the rights they have and the obligations they have under the law.

But today I'm appealing to members of this House, as parents and grandparents as well as elected officials: Please talk to the young people you have an impact on. We need everyone to play a role in keeping workplaces in Ontario safe and making sure that these people make safety a habit throughout their entire career.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** I want to thank the minister for that answer.

It's encouraging to know that ministry staff are proactively inspecting workplaces that employ new and young workers during their annual safety blitz. I think it's important to show our young people that this govern-

ment cares about their well-being. But it's just not feasible to expect ministry staff to make it out to each and every workplace.

The tagline for North American Occupational Safety and Health Week is "Make Safety a Habit for Your Career."

### 1140

**Speaker,** through you to the minister: What is the government doing to ensure that all new and young workers have an understanding of their basic health and safety rights so that they can begin to forge those safety habits earlier in their working life?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you for the supplementary.

I want to reiterate that this government takes worker health and safety very, very seriously. It's a top priority. It's important that new and young workers in this province understand the fact that, under the law, if they're asked to do something that they feel is unsafe, they have the right to refuse to do that until they get more information, until they get more experience, until they learn about what they're being asked to do. They need to know that they have that right as an Ontarian without any fear of reprisal if they're feeling like they're being put in an unsafe situation.

We brought in a new regulation that requires all workers and supervisors in Ontario to complete basic entry-level health and safety training. What it does is it outlines the duties they have, the responsibilities they have, because we know that there's a shared responsibility for workplace safety. On completion of the training, these workers have a basic understanding that I think is going to serve them well in their careers.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, my constituent Mr. Jim Lees is waiting for a long-term-care bed. While he waits, the community care access centre moved Mr. Lees from the hospital to a retirement home that even the CCAC has noted is not the right facility for him, not to mention that the family has paid over \$14,000 for six weeks of care so far in that facility.

On Friday, the CCAC finally agreed to provide personal support care until a nursing home is found, but that still doesn't solve the problem, and it leaves the family paying thousands of dollars more a month than they would if Mr. Lees was in a nursing home.

Minister, Mr. Lees is not alone. This is a problem right across Ontario, and yet your government continues to do nothing about it. Will you help Mr. Lees, or is this yet another example of the health care system we can expect from this government?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** To the Associate Minister of Health.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I want to begin by thanking the member opposite for bringing his constituent's concern to my attention. I also want to offer my sympathies to the family.



I also want to say to the member that, as he knows, I cannot speak to the specifics of any individual case, but I'm happy to talk with you outside and after question period about the issue. I also know that my staff has been in touch, and, as you mentioned, the CCAC is providing some of the care that the constituent is looking for.

But what I can do is reassure the member that in every circumstance where an Ontarian needs urgent care or placement in a long-term-care home, these individuals are placed in the highest-priority category for that placement. The member knows that we're investing strongly in the long-term-care sector.

In fact, in this year's budget, funding for resident care needs increased by an additional 2%. This builds on substantial funding increases our government has made in long-term-care funding for long-term-care—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the minister: Minister, the problem is—and you have not addressed it in your response—you haven't built a new nursing home bed or long-term-care bed in the last 12 years in this province. We built 20,000 during the eight years that we were in office. You haven't put out one new licence for one new bed. It's a crisis out there. Not everyone can stay at home.

In this case, Mr. Lees gets kicked out of the hospital and put into a retirement home. They can't look after him. They can't meet his needs. You're not doing anything about it. We've contacted your office for weeks and weeks and weeks now, and I've written four letters on this. He'll spend another \$4,000 that the family can't afford just in the next month alone.

When are you going to build some new beds and alleviate the problem out there right across the province? Mr. Lees is just one. You're going to bankrupt this family. You're killing them emotionally. This is a senior couple that grew up in Canada expecting the care that they should get in Canada and in Ontario, and you're failing them miserably.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Associate Minister.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Again, I'd like to remind the member that I can't speak to the specifics of this case, but I want to reassure him that in every case where urgent placement is required for long-term-care residents, that does take place, and the CCAC works very hard.

I also want to point out that wait times for long-term-care homes have actually decreased from 190 days in 2008-09 down to 116 days in 2013-14.

My goal, and this government's goal, is to continue to drive investments into long-term-care homes. As—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, we continue to invest in long-term-care homes, but we also continue to invest in the continuum of care, as shown by the 5% increase in community care.

I look forward to working with the member opposite, and I'm committed to making sure that seniors will receive long-term care.

## FIRST RESPONDERS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Premier. Members of CUPE paramedics are here today to once again draw attention—in fact, to seek help from the law-makers in this chamber for the post-traumatic stress disorders their members experience on the job.

We're only too happy to acknowledge the work they do, just not the toll that work can take on them. For eight years—and again last week, for First Responders Day—we've asked this government to take action.

So once again I ask the Premier: Will you make PTSD a presumed workplace injury for first responders experiencing PTSD?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member from Parkdale–High Park for the courtesy she has extended me on this very important issue, for the interest she has shown and for the advocacy that she brings to this issue.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank CUPE and the paramedics who are here with us today for the excellent breakfast this morning. They gave a very, very clear presentation on the importance of PTSD and on the importance of moving ahead on this issue.

I'm pleased to report that there are a number of people in Ontario who are weighing in to this debate and weighing in to this issue, asking this government to do more than it's doing, asking the WSIB to do more than it's doing.

I'm extremely interested in this issue and extremely interested in working with the member from Parkdale–High Park. I think this is an issue that all Ontarians think we owe the people who put their lives on the line every day. We owe them better on PTSD, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Again to the Premier, it's not hard to figure out what needs to be done. For eight years—I emphasize that, Mr. Speaker; eight years—there has been legislation introduced that would recognize PTSD as a workplace injury for first responders in WSIB coverage. That's what our first responders are asking for. The bill for the breakfast is due.

When we call 911, we expect first responders to be at our door in minutes, yet when they need help, we wait years to answer their call. While this government has dithered, 17 first responders have killed themselves. How many more have to die?

Again, the answer to the question is a simple one. Will the minister act today to have PTSD recognized in WSIB legislation for first responders?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member from Parkdale—High Park for the supplementary. Today, the current situation is that the WSIB provides compensation for people who suffer traumatic mental stress where there's a clear link between one acute incident or a series of acute incidents at work or because of injury or illness. What the member is asking for is an improvement to that system. It's one we take very, very seriously.

What people have told us, including CUPE and the paramedics and the first responders, is that things are done differently in British Columbia; things are done differently in Alberta. What we have done is sent people out to those provinces. We've taken a very good examination of how it's done in the other provinces to see if that should apply to the province of Ontario. We're very close, I think, to the end of that research, Speaker, where I will be able to bring some information back to my colleagues in the House.

Once again, we're committed to this issue. We believe we can do better. I think all members of this House would agree with that as well.

#### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. Every May, people in Ontario recognize Sexual Assault Prevention Month. It's a way of bringing awareness to the devastating effects of sexual violence.

Around the world, we are seeing societies acting on the momentum for change and the need for the violence to end. People want to see action to stop sexual violence, and we need to support the survivors. They want this issue brought out of the shadows so that the old attitudes and stereotypes are eliminated.

1150

Mr. Speaker, for Sexual Assault Prevention Month, can the minister please inform this House what Ontario is doing to stop sexual violence?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** First, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of the member from Kitchener Centre as the chair of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, and all the members on that committee. Thank you.

As the member said, it is Sexual Assault Prevention Month, and this gives a tremendous opportunity to teachers, nurses and doctors, sexual assault centres and women's shelters, all advocates and many more to inform others of services for victims. They dispel myths surrounding sexual assault and bring a focus on how important it is to end sexual violence and harassment.

I'm very proud that this year our government is joining them with our bold action plan to stop sexual violence and harassment called It's Never Okay, and our provocative new ad asking everyday bystanders #WhoWillYouHelp challenges the myth that sexual assault is not your business. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely everybody's business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I would like to thank the minister for her answer. It's so important to see that we are recognizing such a very pervasive problem in our society and we're addressing it head on, and that is leadership that people in Ontario can count on.

I'm also glad to hear that there will be additional investments in sexual assault centres across the province, and as the minister mentioned, as the chair of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, we're certainly hearing that from the presenters who are appearing before us.

Supporting those who are on the front lines, helping both female and male victims of sexual violence, is going to mean that survivors can get the care and the attention that they need, and that is what they are telling us they need and want.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please highlight other ways that our government is confronting sexual violence with its action plan?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** We have over 42 sexual assault centres across this province, and I'm very proud that our Premier and Minister Jeff Leal marked the start of Sexual Assault Prevention Month just last week at the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre.

We know that sexual violence is a societal issue that's been with us far too long, and if we only focus on deterrence, we won't seed the generational change that's needed to end sexual violence in Ontario. That's why, under our \$41-million Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment, we focus on teaching our next generation about consent and healthy relationships.

This is a very forward-looking effort that will teach respectful behaviours and we hope will have lasting effect on the safety and security of all of our citizens.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** My question is to the Premier. I received an urgent call from a plant manager in my riding. He has to compete with US industry paying 3 cents a kilowatt hour, and he predicts that unless something changes, his plant will close in two years. He also tells me that if nothing changes, other businesses will head south. These are examples from just one town in my riding.

One of the basic principles of business is to make a profit, but Ontario now has the highest electricity rates in North America. Businesses cannot afford these rates.

Premier, why will you not change your hydro policy to encourage not only this small company but other companies to remain in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I appreciate the question, and the first part of my response is to indicate to the member that I'd be happy to meet, or have my staff meet, with this particular business person.

As you may be aware, I've arranged meetings with other members of your caucus, and we've been able to



introduce business people to the programs that we do have, which can be very helpful. They range from the Industrial Electricity Incentive Program for those who are new or expanding; the ICI program can reduce up to 25%.

All of the LDCs across the province have conservation programs which enable very, very significant savings, and there are programs to help fund those initiatives. We have Home Depot, Canadian Tire Centre in Ottawa, Tim Hortons across the province—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** It's not helping, down my way. In Haldimand and in Caledonia, over nine years, this government has destroyed our home-building economy. In Norfolk, you've destroyed much of our legal tobacco industry. You've destroyed OPG Nanticoke, and you've tripled the top-end cost of electricity—16 cents a kilowatt hour. When we were in government, it was 4.3 cents.

My local companies are being lured by North Carolina. They're being induced by Michigan, Ohio, New York State—all these inducements are on the table. They come and visit. I've heard this from a number of companies, even before the latest electricity hike. Now it's accelerated—again, all of this, just in my riding.

Premier, why will you not consider a dramatic reversal of your disastrous electricity policies?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I wanted to help out here by giving the member an idea of how he can help businesses like that particular business, and businesses right across this province. What that member can do is support our budget—our budget, that, for businesses like that, is extending for 10 years the number one program that our business community asked for, and that's to provide them with incentives to invest in capital, to invest in upgrading their machinery, to invest in their buildings. He can support our budget, which is providing \$130 billion over the next—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is never too late to have somebody named.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The member could support our budget, which is going to be investing \$130 billion over the next 10 years, supporting 110,000 to 150,000 jobs every year.

He should have supported—and maybe he can go back on this—the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, which is creating tens of thousands of jobs in southwestern Ontario.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In the east members' gallery, from the riding of Haliburton-Kawartha

Lakes-Brock in the 39th parliament, we have Mr. Rick Johnson visiting—a former member.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe North on a point of order.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I want a correction on what I might have said to the Minister of Education earlier.

I believe I said that “it's highly unlikely that 817,000 elementary students....” I should have said “it's highly likely.” That's what I meant. Thank you.

#### VISITORS

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence. I have an important constituent who just recently arrived in this House. Please welcome to the Legislature my youngest daughter, Jessica, who is in the members' gallery. Welcome to this House.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I have some special guests I'd like to introduce. I'd like to welcome Fraser Davison, Karthik Ramanathan and Pratyusha Mohan, who are visiting us from the United Kingdom today.

I'd also like to welcome the mother and father of my page, Mr. and Mrs. Tiwari.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature two of my constituents of Ottawa-Orléans who are here today with the Ontario Paramedic Association. I would like to welcome Andrew Phillips and Norm Robillard.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** In the members' east gallery today, I'd like to introduce my intern, a native from Cobourg, Ontario, Dan Quesada, who will be working with me over the next months ahead.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1159 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I'm absolutely thrilled to introduce four midwives joining us today: Bridget Lynch and Jay MacGillivray, two of Canada's very first registered midwives, Sara Wolfe and Diane Simon. I welcome you. Thank you.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to celebrate Netherlands Liberation Day. Seventy years ago, at the end of the Second World War, brave soldiers liberated the Netherlands and many of them came from

right here in Canada. The Canadian Armed Forces gave my parents and our country back our freedom.

I remember my mother's stories of the jubilation when the soldiers entered the village. Those Canadian soldiers are the reason that my family later came to Canada. And those soldiers are the reason that Canada and the Netherlands have such a strong friendship to this day. The people of the Netherlands still remember the sacrifices our Canadian soldiers made. Young people in Holland grow up hearing the stories to this day, and come out to parades and events to honour the Canadian Armed Forces.

Every year on May 5 the Netherlands celebrates Liberation Day. It's a celebration of freedom and all of those who put their lives on the line to help a nation. It's also the reason that Ontarians celebrate Dutch Heritage Month every May. This year is even more special as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the liberation.

On the weekend, I was honoured to walk in the veterans' parade with Netherlands Consul General Anne Gerard van Leeuwen. It was part of the festival that saw thousands come out to celebrate the veterans and all those who liberated our country.

As a Dutch Canadian and a person born liberated because of their efforts, I want to say to those veterans:

*Remarks in Dutch.*

Thank you. We will always be indebted to you.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I rise today to draw our attention to Children's Mental Health Week in Ontario. The reason we mark this important week is to promote awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health difficulties while seeking to decrease the stigma associated with mental health problems.

The fact is that one in five children struggle with mental health problems. That translates to more than 500,000 children in Ontario alone. Our children need to know that mental health problems can happen to anyone, regardless of age or circumstances. In fact, 70% of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during childhood or adolescence.

The good news is that mental health issues can be managed and overcome. The sooner we can get our children help, the quicker they can begin to heal. My concern is that while mental illnesses constitutes more than 15% of the disease burden in Canada, these illnesses receive only 5.5% of our health care dollars.

I want to acknowledge the parents, volunteers and mental health service providers, particularly Children's Mental Health Ontario, for their tireless efforts to improve the lives of Ontario's children and youth.

Lastly, I want to let our children suffering from mental health problems know that we care and support you every step of the way through this difficult journey.

#### MIDWIFERY

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Mr. Speaker, today we join people from all around the world to recognize the

International Day of the Midwife. I know I speak for all of caucus when I say that all MPPs are aware of the critical role that midwives play in strengthening our community health care system and to the well-being of thousands of women and newborns in our province.

I also saw first-hand the excellent service and reassurance that midwives provided to my family when my daughter welcomed my grandson into the world on July 4, 2013. The midwife service was outstanding, not just before the birth but during it as well, and the aftercare that my daughter and her son received at their home.

Here in Ontario, there are about 760 registered midwives and 30 aboriginal midwives providing maternity care to support low-risk births. The Ontario Midwifery Program is growing by 90 registered midwives each year as new graduates enter the profession.

Ontario's midwives are a critical partner in our primary care system. Since becoming a regulated health profession in 1994, they have delivered over 150,000 babies, and 35,000 of those babies were born at home.

Working with the Association of Ontario Midwives, our government, as stated in our recent budget, will be expanding our support to grow the number of aboriginal midwives in Ontario. We look forward to that program.

I would like to sincerely thank our midwives for all of your hard work and dedication to Ontario families.

#### CREMATION SERVICES

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I'd like to bring to the attention of the House a struggle that a constituent of mine, Dale Hilton, is having with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services. Mr. Hilton operates a bio-cremation service that offers an eco-friendly alternative to flame-based cremation. The process he uses is approved in Quebec and Saskatchewan, as well as many US states.

However, due to the meddling of a senior ministry employee in the approvals process for this method, Mr. Hilton has been unable to provide his service to the community. What's concerning about the interference is that the ministry employee has usurped the jurisdiction of the municipality by requesting local municipal staff to withhold granting Mr. Hilton's municipal licence, which is required to start the approval process.

I don't understand why one of the ministry staff would punish and create such hardships for a small local Ontario business which is providing an environmentally friendly, widely approved method for a service whose demand is surely to increase.

This is a prime example of how the Liberal government is the single largest obstacle and impediment to permitting new technologies and new businesses to flourish in this province.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** The month of May is marked as Lyme Disease Awareness Month and a time to remember the thousands of Canadians who are affected



by Lyme disease and what we can do to help them. I have heard so many tragic stories from across Ontario of people who were unable to access necessary treatment because of how poorly we understand this disease.

Lyme disease is a significant and growing health issue across our province. Lyme disease is a tick-borne bacterial infection. Lyme-carrying ticks are on the rise across Canada, with the highest rates of human-acquired cases in Ontario. If left diagnosed and untreated, Lyme can mimic other diseases like ALS, multiple sclerosis and lupus.

I am encouraged that my motion calling for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to develop a comprehensive and integrated Lyme disease strategy for Ontario passed unanimously last November.

Those in the Lyme community, as well as those who are informed and concerned about Lyme disease, are eagerly waiting for an update on the progress of this strategy.

Tomorrow, many people from the Ontario Lyme Alliance, CanLyme, and the G. Magnotta Foundation for Vector-Borne Diseases, among others in the health care and veterinarian community, will be joining us here at Queen's Park to acknowledge Lyme awareness month and once again bring attention to this terrible disease and voice our concerns for a rapid implementation of the Lyme awareness prevention strategy.

May is Lyme awareness month—#RibbonsUp.

## EVENTS IN OTTAWA-ORLÉANS

### ÉVÉNEMENTS DIVERS À OTTAWA-ORLÉANS

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** On the weekend, I attended several community events.

Vendredi soir, j'avais le plaisir de féliciter la chorale Les jeunes de coeur du Centre Séraphin-Marion d'Orléans et ses 55 choristes retraités et semi-retraités pour le spectacle et leur implication dans la communauté.

Saturday afternoon, a councillor from Cumberland ward, Stephen Blais, hosted his annual ladies' tea, and I was happy to meet many members of our community.

Samedi soir fut la première édition de la Soirée Saphir, où six femmes francophones ont été reconnues pour leur apport au sein de secteurs comme le sport, l'environnement, la politique, l'éducation et les affaires.

1510

Sunday morning, I was pleased to join my colleague John Fraser at the annual Hike for Hospice, in Ottawa, at the May Court Hospice. They were raising awareness about the importance of quality end-of-life care for our aging and supporting their families through the journey.

After that, my staff, family and I spent the afternoon bowling in honour of James Osborne, who took his own life at the age of 18. His family and friends organized this third annual event to raise awareness about youth mental health and funds for a non-profit called Partners for

Mental Health. It was a truly inspiring event and a reminder to support our friends who may be struggling.

It was a wonderful weekend in Orléans, Mr. Speaker.

## FIRST RESPONDERS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members' statements? The member from—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** You had no problem in question period remembering.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're darned right I don't have any problem—Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the words of grade 6 student Matthew Beal, of Georges Vanier school in Belleville, "First responders in our community help all those in need every day and their importance cannot be measured. I'm grateful to each one of them that have helped my family, my friends and me."

My colleague Frank Klees, the former member for Newmarket-Aurora, passed legislation in December 2013 declaring the first day of May in honour of our paramedics, police and firefighters. They're the first on scene at most emergencies and are the professionals tasked with keeping our communities safe.

To mark the occasion, my constituency office ran a colouring and essay contest at schools across Prince Edward and Hastings counties last week. The judges, some local police and fire chiefs, had a tough job choosing our winners. On First Responders Day, on Friday, we surprised the contest winners in their classrooms with prizes for their creative pictures and their short stories. Young Mr. Beal was one of those winners.

Another award went to Julianne Wade of St. Paul's secondary, who no longer has to share the family iPad; she has one of her own now for her great essay on first responders. At Sir John A. Macdonald School, we surprised grade 2 student Daniel Power and grade 3 student Miah Hubble with gifts from the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

Acting Inspector Chris Barry of the Belleville Police Service spoke with the students about the rewarding parts of his job and encouraged the youngsters to consider becoming a first responder when they're a little bit older, because of how rewarding it is for him.

So thanks to my constituency staff and our partners in the contest at IBC. But we especially thank our first responders right across the province.

## ETOBICOKE CITY CENTRE

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** It's a pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon to speak about the Jane's Walk that I conducted in my riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore this past Saturday. I was joined by about 80 people to walk through what was termed the "farewell tour" for Spaghetti Junction. Mr. Speaker, Spaghetti Junction is the affectionate term for the Six Points interchange in the Etobicoke city centre in my riding—the intersection of

Dundas, Kipling and Bloor—a 1960s-era interchange in the middle of our community that was designed simply to speed traffic along at the edge of the city back then. But now it's at the heart of Etobicoke.

Over 14 years, I had the pleasure of leading an exercise to redesign, re-plan that area. The city of Toronto has begun the infrastructure work, a \$50-million project, to transform the area into a vibrant pedestrian community. Mr. Speaker, the province also is investing in this area, through some very strategic investments in public transit infrastructure. They helped fund a new entrance into Kipling subway station and soon we'll be starting a new Kipling mobility hub.

I'm very proud that this exercise has been seen as an international best practice. I was very proud to go to Harvard Graduate School of Design and deliver a lecture on this initiative. The residents that met with me this past Saturday for this tour were very happy to see the transformative change that's going to be coming to Etobicoke city centre—the result of good planning and good investments in infrastructure.

#### FAITH COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, the first Sunday in May represents the founding anniversary of two dynamic, growing and caring faith communities in western Mississauga: the Praise Cathedral Worship Centre in Meadowvale and the Hindu Heritage Centre in Streetsville. Each celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2015; each celebrated it last Sunday, May 3.

At Praise, the congregation comes together from all across North America and the Caribbean. Featuring—without question—the premier choir in Mississauga, Praise is an experience in faith, song and joy for its growing congregation and for visitors alike.

At the Hindu Heritage Centre, Mississauga has gained a landmark temple and a Hindu congregation that has brought some of the best of Indian culture, language and tradition to Streetsville.

India's Consul General Akhilesh Mishra joined me and Mississauga–Streetsville MP Brad Butt at a flag-raising and a celebration of Indian music and dance.

Premier Kathleen Wynne attended the 10th-anniversary celebration at the Hindu Heritage Centre, along with MPPs Dipika Damerla and Amrit Mangat.

It was a very special day for the faithful in western Mississauga, and I was proud to play a part in it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to section 28 of the Auditor General Act, I have laid upon the table the audited financial statements of the Office of the Auditor General for the year ended March 31, 2014.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated May 5, 2015, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy, and I move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 57, Loi créant un cadre pour les régimes de pension agréés collectifs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed. Carried.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 16, 2015, the bill is ordered for third reading.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I rise today to recognize this month of May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario. This month is a time to raise awareness of the devastating impact that sexual assault has on our society. It's also a time to focus on the measures that are being taken to stop the violence and to support the survivors.

Throughout May, women's shelters, sexual assault centres and advocates will be speaking out in their communities on the need to end sexual assaults. Last Friday, the Premier and Minister Leal were at the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre in Peterborough to kick off Sexual Assault Prevention Month, so I thank them for that.

Around the world, people are struggling with the prevalence of sexual violence and are acting on the desire for that violence to end.

In Canada alone, one in three women will experience sexual violence in her lifetime—one in three women.



That statistic is a devastating reality for those who have been affected, whether through personal experience or through the experience of a family member, a friend or a colleague. It is unacceptable.

That's why our government is moving forward with It's Never Okay, our bold Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment in Ontario.

We saw the need for stronger action on how we, as a government and a society, confront these burdens. But it's also an opportunity to bring a much-needed focus to an issue that can be hard to talk about openly and honestly.

Our \$41-million plan is the sum of many, many parts, each crucial to an effective response to sexual violence and harassment.

The plan includes new procedures to improve the experience of survivors navigating the criminal justice system. It includes better funding for community-based sexual assault centres to give more support to survivors, and it provides for safer workplaces and safer campuses, through new legislation. It will also help to ensure that young people learn about gender equality and respectful relationships at an early age.

Above all, the plan recognizes the need to challenge and change the deep-rooted attitudes and behaviours that are at the very core of sexual violence and harassment.

I'm very proud that our public education campaign got off to a great start earlier this year with our powerful ad and hashtag, which is #WhoWillYouHelp. The ad has been seen around the world, and our best estimates are that the ad has reached about 83.5 million people. It's fantastic. This ad, the same ad, has been viewed more than 1.8 million times on YouTube alone. I don't know if you look at YouTube, Speaker, but it has been viewed—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** He says yes, so thank you for that.

1520

In the past two months, our government has moved forward on other key initiatives of the action plan. On March 31, we had our inaugural meeting of Ontario's new permanent Roundtable on Violence Against Women.

Speaker, I just must say that there are so many fabulous women and men from the sector who are very committed to eradicating violence and harassment against women.

I also want to recognize the all-party Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment and thank all the members from all sides of the House for their work and for listening to often very difficult stories from individuals across our province.

Our government understands that stopping sexual violence requires a sustained commitment and a collective effort. We all need to be part of a solution. So during Sexual Assault Prevention Month—and every month, quite frankly—I urge all Ontarians to step up and speak up. Use the hashtag #SAPM to join this month's conversation on social media and keep up with the #It'sNeverOkay and #WhoWillYouHelp campaigns.

Your voices are part of a powerful conversation about creating a province where all people can live safely without fear and with dignity and respect.

## PROBATION OFFICERS' WEEK

### SEMAINE DES AGENTS DE PROBATION

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** It is a pleasure to rise in this Legislature to recognize probation and parole officers' week and acknowledge the outstanding women and men who serve our communities as probation and parole officers.

Before I begin, Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Dale Boylan, vice-president of the probation and parole officers' association of Ontario, who is here with us today in the members' gallery. Thank you for joining us today, Dale, and thank you for the work you and your members do to make Ontario an even safer place.

Probation and parole officers, along with all correctional staff, are an essential part of Ontario's justice system.

Les agents de probation et de libération conditionnelle, avec tout le personnel des services correctionnels, jouent un rôle essentiel au sein du système de justice de l'Ontario.

The theme for the week is "Motivating and Empowering Change." It underscores the incredible work that probation and parole officers, and all correctional staff, do to work with clients to change their behaviour, guide them to think differently, make better choices, and become part of building safer communities across Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I think their work was best summed up recently by Christine Beintema, a probation and parole officer in Chatham. This is what she said: "Probation and parole officers believe in a person's ability to change. We work hard to develop rapport with offenders to support and encourage that change, thereby reducing their risk for reoffending in the community."

Speaker, their work forms a key part of our government's transformation of correctional services to break the cycle of reoffending through improved staff and inmate safety, enhanced rehabilitation programs, and successful reintegration through continuing support to ensure that clients become contributing members of society.

Every year, thousands of adults are able to turn their lives around because of the support and guidance of probation or parole officers.

Chaque année, des milliers d'adultes parviennent à transformer leur vie grâce à l'appui et aux conseils des agents de probation et de libération conditionnelle.

As a result of their work, Mr. Speaker, the overall number of offenders who reoffend has in fact declined in recent years, even as the overall risk levels and complexity of offenders under supervision has gone up. We are now taking added steps to build on that success and to significantly reduce the risk of reoffending, especially among high-risk offenders. For example, we're targeting more resources to our medium- to high-risk offenders because evidence tells us that we have

more success in breaking the cycle of reoffending when their sentence is served in the community. That, again, is because of the hard work of our probation and parole officers and the network of thousands of community organizations and support groups that they are plugged into. Likewise, when a person serving a custodial sentence is released, the transition back into the community is likely made easier by the support of a probation and parole officer.

I want to thank Ontario's probation and parole officers, on behalf of our government, for the difference they make in people's lives and in building safer communities.

Je tiens à remercier les agents de probation et de libération conditionnelle de l'Ontario pour la différence qu'ils font dans la vie des gens et dans l'édification de collectivités plus sûres.

The duties of probation and parole officers and all correctional staff have become increasingly complex, very demanding and challenging. It is appropriate that we honour the contributions and accomplishments of these men and women and ensure they receive the recognition they deserve.

This week is an opportunity for us to pause and learn more about their profession and to say thank you for the challenges they take on and the excellent work they do on our behalf.

Cette semaine est l'occasion pour nous de célébrer les agents de probation et de libération conditionnelle, d'en apprendre davantage sur leur profession, et de les remercier pour les défis qu'ils relèvent et l'excellent travail qu'ils font en notre nom.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all members to use this week to visit a local probation and parole office to say hello and to congratulate them for their tireless efforts to keep our communities safe.

### SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** May is South Asian Heritage Month. South Asians began arriving in Canada at the turn of the 20th century. They come from all parts: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, as well as parts of Africa and the Caribbean. There are more than one million people of South Asian descent living in Ontario today in the GTA. This is a community as ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse as any in Canada.

Festivities to celebrate South Asian Heritage Month will be held all across Ontario, giving us all a chance to learn about and celebrate the many contributions that this community has made to our economy, our culture and our neighbourhoods.

Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues that May is South Asian Heritage Month in Ontario. Since 2001, this is a month during which we make a point of recognizing a community that helped build this province. It's a community that, to this day, continues to help make Ontario culturally richer and economically stronger.

The first South Asian migrants to Canada arrived in Vancouver in 1903. For many decades following, British Columbia was their destination of choice. But that began

to change in the 1950s, when many South Asians turned their eyes to Ontario and the wonderful opportunities offered by our province. Today, the South Asian diaspora in Ontario includes more than one million people, mostly in the GTA, but also in Ottawa, Hamilton, London and Windsor.

This community is, quite simply, one of the most diverse populations in Canada. Newcomers also arrive here from South Asian pockets in other parts of the world, created during colonial times. These include Uganda, Kenya, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Fiji, and Mauritius. Speaker, these are communities within a community, and we are proud to have welcomed them into ours. As a result, South Asian Canadians represent a number of different religions and cultures.

Through their diversity, they are making an important contribution to Ontario's social, cultural and economic fabric. This includes their insights about a part of the world that is rapidly growing in economic importance. Indeed, every newcomer to Ontario from this region holds an important connection to their former home and can help bring more wealth and prosperity to Ontario.

Ontario was built on immigration, and our future prosperity depends on immigration. Immigration creates the cultural and religious diversity that makes our province one of the greatest places in the world to live.

This month, I urge my colleagues to think about the ways in which South Asian Canadians have contributed to our province and helped make it a better place. There will be festivities celebrating South Asian culture all across the province in May, and I urge all Ontarians to join in.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus to address Sexual Assault Prevention Month.

Since 1988, May has been Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Canada. For 31 days, individuals, teachers, nurses, campuses and community organizations make extra efforts to inform the public about what constitutes sexual assault and the changes necessary to eradicate this abuse.

**1530**

It is called Sexual Assault Prevention Month because it is not enough to be aware of the issue. We need to stop it before it happens.

"Sexual violence" is a broad term that includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, rape and trafficking. Verbal sexual harassment and the use of photos sent over the Internet are also forms of sexual violence. In each case, consent is not given, or certainly not given freely.

One in three Canadian women will experience sexual assault in their lifetime, with the majority of victims being under 25 years of age. According to Canada's National Clearinghouse on Family Violence in 2008, one



in six Canadian men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

Acknowledging that sexual assault happens is a first step towards addressing this issue. As a member of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, I've heard first-hand from front-line service providers and survivors themselves who have appeared that there is still more that can be done to combat this issue. I'm sure that our work will help address where those gaps may exist.

I want to finish by thanking all of the sexual assault centres, including my own Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre and Women's Resources, for all their important work.

#### PROBATION OFFICERS' WEEK

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** On behalf of the PC Party I would like to recognize Probation Officers' Week and pay tribute to the men and women who serve Ontario's communities as probation and parole officers.

Probation and parole officers play an important role in helping to ensure public safety in Ontario by managing offenders sentenced to serve their time outside correctional facilities. Because probation and parole officers play an important role in protecting our safety, it is important that we ensure that we attract and recruit candidates of the highest calibre. Therefore, those who go into the profession are required to hold a degree in one of the following disciplines: social work, psychology, sociology or criminology, or a degree and experience greater than five years in total in social services or correctional organizations. They must also possess strong verbal and written communication skills, as well as counselling and assessment skills.

Once hired, new probation and parole officers must successfully complete a comprehensive basic training program that builds on the empirical research and principles of effective correctional intervention and programming. They are given ongoing training in subjects that will help them perform their duties in a professional and effective manner.

The parole and probation officers of this province are great professionals, great advocates of our community and ensure that we remain safe in our homes at the same time as ensuring that those who are serving their time outside in the community—helping them transform back into the community so that they will be serving the population once they return.

I thank the parole and probation officers of this province. I look forward to the government continuing to work well with this profession. In addition, I'd also like to note that we hope they put their safety in the forefront, just as we hope that correctional officers too are looked after with their safety.

#### SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It's an honour to rise today on behalf of the PC caucus to recognize May as South Asian Heritage Month.

The South Asian culture is vibrant and thriving here in Ontario. The minister has recounted the great legacy of that community, which stretches back 177 years from today to a date we mark as South Asian Arrival Day.

This community continues to grow here and to contribute in meaningful ways to the greater good of our province. We see this community well represented in the spheres of academia, athletics, business, research and innovation, politics and entrepreneurship. The rich cultural contributions and the robust economic contributions that they make are appreciated across the province. I hope that we can all take this occasion as an opportunity to enrich our understanding and appreciation of South Asia's rich culture, traditions and heritage.

Sadly, with the terrible earthquake that afflicted the people of Nepal and northern India just over a week ago, this is also a time to extend our condolences and prayers to the people of those countries.

Our South Asian community provides a living social, economic and diplomatic bridge between Ontario and many prospering countries throughout the world. They have played and will continue to play a vital role as we all work towards making Ontario the best place to live, work and raise our families.

On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I want to thank the South Asian community and wish them a very happy South Asian Heritage Month.

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Each May in Ontario, Sexual Assault Prevention Month recognizes that the prevention of sexual assault is a collective responsibility. It is not the responsibility of women, who are constantly being told, "Don't wear revealing clothing, don't drink too much, don't invite men into your apartment and always keep an eye on your drink."

Over the years, warnings like this have perpetuated a pervasive rape culture, particularly on post-secondary campuses where as many as one quarter of female students experience some form of sexual assault. Rape culture suggests that the onus is on women to prevent the assault and to prove that they were not responsible for it. By doing so, it removes accountability from the perpetrators who commit the assault.

Shifting from a culture of "no means no" to "yes means yes" means teaching boys from an early age about consent, respect and rights. We need to stop blaming victims of assault, who can be men as well as women. We need to build a system that stops revictimizing survivors.

A 2004 study in Canada found that a single incident of sexual assault can be a life-shattering experience, with survivors feeling fear, guilt, shame and low self-esteem. Yet many survivors do not report to the police because they fear being blamed and because they fear being stigmatized and traumatized by a system that results in a conviction rate of less than 1%.

Let us commit to creating a coordinated, integrated and survivor-led approach to the prevention of sexual assault that focuses on public education, that truly supports survivors, that ensures trauma-informed responses from police, health care, education, social services and justice, and that respects survivors' needs for constructive and supportive alternatives to the justice system.

#### PROBATION OFFICERS' WEEK

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm honoured to rise on behalf of probation and parole officers from across Ontario to recognize probation and parole officers' week and the important role they play in keeping communities safe across our province.

As you know, I'm still new to the role of NDP critic for community safety and correctional services, but I have been learning as fast as I can, and I've had the opportunity to meet with some probation and parole officers already, as well as a number of other correctional staff. I hope to reflect some of their concerns here today.

I thank the minister for the sincerity of his comments and for voicing his support of probation and parole officers, but actions speak louder than words and there are still a number of things we can do as legislators to support correctional workers—most urgently, understaffing. The government needs to address the significant understaffing of probation and parole officers in our communities and correctional officers in our provincial facilities.

According to the Auditor General, there is currently a 60% recidivism rate and a great deal of that can be attributed to understaffing. The minister referenced a number of initiatives that the ministry is undertaking to expand the role of probation and parole officers in community safety, but ultimately these promises ring hollow until this root cause is addressed. This is not an effective formula for enhancing public safety.

Probation and parole officers in Ontario have the highest caseload of any province in Canada. I ask the minister to take a progressive approach, address chronic understaffing and invest in our community safety. Our probation and parole officers deserve to be safe, appreciated and sufficiently staffed. Thank you to our probation and parole officers for the work they do.

#### SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's my pleasure to rise today on behalf of the Ontario NDP in recognition of South Asian Heritage Month. Across Ontario there's recognition for many contributions of the South Asian community in the province. We know, according to 2006 census data, that more than five million, or 16%, of Canadians are visible minorities, with South Asian and Chinese accounting for almost half this number.

South Asian Heritage Month celebrates the long and rich history of Asian Canadians and their contributions to Canada and the world and particularly for us today in this

province. That's because a large majority of the Canadian population of South Asian origin, whether East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Punjabi or Tamil, to name a few, is concentrated in Ontario.

In 2001, Ontario was the home to 62% of all Canadians of South Asian origin, while another 22% lived in British Columbia. For South Asians, the month of May has been a time of celebration and commemoration of their arrival from the Indian subcontinent to Canada in acknowledgement of their connection and the right to migrate as British subjects, and this they share with the founders of this province.

Today, South Asians make up a significant proportion of Ontario's population and are proud to draw upon their heritage and traditions, contributing to many aspects of culture, commerce and public service across this province. We are proud to recognize and pay tribute to the contributions South Asian immigrants have made and continue to make to the development and general well-being of the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. It's now time for petitions.

1540

#### PETITIONS

##### SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition, titled "Maintain the John McGivney Children's Centre Preschool Program," addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre annually helps about 2,500 children with physical, neurological and developmental challenges;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is an exceptional program administered by expert faculty and staff that offers youth and their families a transformative experience that they would not receive in a less specialized setting;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program faces a shortfall in provincial funding;

"Whereas families raising children with special needs incur increased costs for care which the income test does not properly reflect;

"Whereas compliance with the provincial requirements means that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is unable to be sustained;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program closure will mean a loss of a valued skill set of expertise from teachers and support staff in our community that will leave some of the area's most vulnerable children and families without proper child care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To make up any funding shortfalls that result from transitioning to a fee subsidy model so that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program can re-



main operational and consider changes to the income test to better reflect the increased costs families raising children with special needs incur.”

Speaker, I fully agree with this petition. I will sign my name to it and give it to Joshua to bring up to the desk.

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

“Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto ... and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school ... in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto’; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; and

“Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space for a French-language secondary school in east Toronto;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary

school ... in the community ... so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

I agree with this petition. I leave it with Abdullah.

#### PESTICIDES

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government of Ontario is proposing to make regulatory changes to the Pesticides Act that will have a considerable negative impact on virtually all of Ontario’s corn and soybean farmers;

“Whereas comments on the proposed regulations need to be submitted by May 7, 2015; yet the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs plainly states on their website that ‘[t]he optimum planting date [for corn] is on or before May 7 in southwestern Ontario and May 10 in central and eastern Ontario. Delaying planting past the optimum date can result in yield reductions averaging about 1% per day of delay in May.’;

“Whereas the ministry’s website also says: ‘The highest yields of soybeans are obtained from early plantings, generally the first 10 days of May. Later plantings are likely to incur significant reductions in yield ...’;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Instruct the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change to extend the comment period on EBR posting number 012-3733 beyond the planting season for corn and soybeans as defined by AgriCorp planting deadlines to allow farmers to farm, and be properly consulted on these proposed regulations that will significantly impact their livelihoods.”

I thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition, Mr. Speaker.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that was given to me by René and Carole Ménard, from Hanmer, in my riding. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major budget shortfalls leading to a decrease of 87,000 hours of nursing care in psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical unit, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care, and the emergency department, the closure of beds on the surgical unit, as well as cuts to support services including cleaning; and

“Whereas Ontario’s provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

“Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are reduced all across the hospital;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to: “Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect beds and services.

“Increase overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces.”

I fully support this petition, and I will ask Ishika to bring it to the Clerk.

### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas some establishments have instituted unfair tipping practices in which a portion of tips and gratuities are being deducted and kept by owners;

"Whereas employees in establishments where tipping is a standard practice, such as restaurants, bars and hair salons, supplement their income with tips and gratuities and depend on those to maintain an adequate standard of living;

"Whereas customers expect that when they leave a tip or gratuity that the benefit will be going to the employees who directly contributed to their positive experience;

"Whereas most establishments do respect their employees and do not collect their tips and gratuities unfairly and thus are left at a disadvantage compared to those owners who use tips and gratuities to pad their margins;

"Whereas other jurisdictions in North America such as Quebec, New Brunswick and New York City have passed legislation to protect employees' tips;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support Bill 12, the Protecting Employees' Tips Act, 2014, and help shield Ontario employees and businesses from operators with improper tipping practices while protecting accepted and standard practices such as tip pooling among employees."

I wholeheartedly agree with my private member's bill, and I sign my initials.

### WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I have a timely petition in support of improved winter road maintenance.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the present area maintenance contract system has failed Ontario drivers the past two winters;

"Whereas ensuring our roads are as safe as possible during the winter driving season is one of the fundamental responsibilities of the Ministry of Transportation;

"Whereas the unsafe conditions in the winter of 2013-14 led to a special investigation by the Auditor General of Ontario;

"Whereas the managed outsourcing system for winter roads maintenance, where the private contractor is responsible for maintenance, but MTO patrols the region and directs the contractor on the deployment of vehicles, sand and salt, and has a proven track record for removing snow and ensuring that Ontario's highways are safe for travellers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario Ministry of Transportation take immediate action to improve the maintenance of winter roads based on the positive benefits of the previous delivery model, where MTO plays more of a role in directing the private contractor."

I sign my signature to this and pass this to page Thomas.

### POET LAUREATE

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas poets laureate have been officially recognized at all levels of Canadian government and in at least 15 countries around the world; and

"Whereas the establishment of our own poet laureate for the province of Ontario would promote literacy and celebrate Ontario culture and heritage, along with raising public awareness of poetry and of the spoken word; and

"Whereas the member from Windsor-Tecumseh has introduced private member's Bill 71 to establish the Office of Poet Laureate for the province of Ontario as a non-partisan attempt to promote literacy, to focus attention on our amazing poets and to give new focus to the arts community in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the establishment of the Office of Poet Laureate as an officer of the Ontario Legislature and that private member's Bill 71, An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario, receive swift passage through the legislative process."

It's my pleasure to affix my signature and give this to page Ashton.

1550

### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I have a petition here for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I'm going to give it to the big page Colton here beside me and sign it.



## GASOLINE PRICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that was given to me by Agostino Alves. He's from Geraldton. It goes as follows:

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it, and ask Joshua to bring it to the Clerk.

## WATER FLUORIDATION

**Ms. Daïene Vernile:** This is a petition on fluoride for all Ontario drinking water.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health ... on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I agree with this petition. I will sign my name to it and give it to Jae Min.

## ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

"Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

"Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

"Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

"Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research."

I fully agree with this petition. I will sign my name to it and give it to Madison to bring up to the Clerk.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The time for petitions is over.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT  
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER  
L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO  
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 4, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi

visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The debate ended with the government.

The member of the official opposition; the member from Oxford.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 91. Before I get into the specifics of the bill, I want to just take a moment to comment on the budget overall. The government promised to balance the budget for 2017-18. That's only two years away. This budget should have laid out a real plan to get us there; instead, we saw spending increases of \$2.4 billion.

When the Liberal government took office in 2003, the provincial debt stood at \$139 billion. A dozen years later, it now stands at \$299 billion. If it were a government ministry, interest on the debt would now be the third-largest Ontario ministry after health and education. In fact, the cost to service our debt is up 5.7%, which would also make it the fastest-growing ministry. Compare that to health care spending, which is up just 1.9%. That's not even enough to keep up with inflation and population growth, and it means further cuts to front-line services at hospitals and elsewhere within the system.

I also want to point out what's not in this bill or in this budget. Despite the increase in spending of \$2.4 billion, there is no additional help for the farmers. There are no steps towards increasing the cap on risk management programs. Despite the increase in spending of \$2.4 billion, municipalities saw another decrease in the important Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund grants. Despite the increase in spending of \$2.4 billion, we are actually seeing less provincial money going into health care. The Canada Health Transfer from the federal government to Ontario increased by—and this is very important—\$652 million, but health care spending in this budget only increases by \$598 million, a difference of \$54 million. That means there is \$54 million less in provincial dollars going into health care.

There are also no steps in this bill or this budget towards addressing the five key requests that the PC caucus put forward. We asked the government to streamline home care services. Instead, they created a new layer of bureaucracy.

We asked them to put forward a serious, credible, detailed plan to deal with the deficit and debt. Instead, spending increased by \$2.4 billion.

We asked them to listen to experts like the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and for the government to walk away from the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Instead, they recommitted to the plan, which will only increase costs for both employees and businesses.

We asked them to reject the planned implementation of a carbon tax, the so-called tax on everything. Instead, they are embracing it.

We asked them to take action to make electricity rates more affordable. Instead, the government is proposing to sell our hydro assets and put an increasing burden on the

ratepayers. Not only did the government not take action to reduce hydro rates, as we had asked, but this bill contains measures that will actually increase rates by selling off the majority of Hydro One.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal to sell off Hydro One is a little like selling off the house to pay for a fancy new sports car. At first, it's great, and you show it off to your friends. You drive it all over the place. But after a couple of years, you need major repairs or a new car. You have nothing to show for it, and the asset is gone.

In fact, in 2003, the member from Guelph, who is now the Minister of Education, shared our views on this subject. At the time, she said, "They understood that we need to hang on to our public assets like generators and Hydro One.... They understood that if you just sell off public assets, that's a one-year wonder. You do it once and then it's gone, and then what are you left with? You're left with a deficit."

**1600**

The Premier has already stated that she can't guarantee that this won't drive hydro costs up any further. Over the last few years we've seen hydro rates spiral in Ontario. People and businesses don't have any room left in their budget for more increases.

I recently heard from a constituent who is now heating her home with wood and worked hard to get her hydro costs down. Her usage in one month was only \$87.64, yet with the extra charges—delivery charges, debt retirement, regulatory charges and HST—the total amount of the bill was \$274.87.

This government doesn't seem to understand the impact that these hydro rate increases have had, that people are being forced to choose between heat and eat. They don't understand that people are being forced to leave their homes. This government doesn't seem to understand that hydro increases are forcing businesses out of this province.

In my recent Oxford business survey, 94% of the businesses said that they had been impacted by the increased cost of hydro. When companies choose where they build or expand, the cost of doing business is a major factor. For many companies, the cost of hydro is one of the reasons they choose to locate elsewhere. It's one of the reasons that our businesses are struggling to make ends meet and to grow.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture's column following the budget said, "With no mention of a province-wide farm electricity rate and a delay in the natural gas expansion program to rural Ontario, farmers will have to wait longer for more competitive energy costs."

The people and businesses of Ontario have been asking this government for help. They don't want to give up control of hydro. They want you to use the control that you have to help people who are struggling. They want you to use the control you have to reduce hydro costs. Instead, this government is proposing to give away majority control and oversight.

Last year, the CEO of Hydro One made \$745,000, but that may be the last time that the people who are paying



for his salary get to know what it is because this bill exempts Hydro One from the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act or so-called sunshine law. When public salaries were released, CBC News reported, "There are about 12,500 employees from OPG, Hydro One and their subsidiaries on the 2014 list, up by nearly 1,000 over 2013, when the Auditor General warned those salaries were driving up electricity rates."

Now, not only will Hydro One not appear on the sunshine list; neither the auditor nor the Ombudsman would have the authority to investigate problems there. The government cannot give up this oversight. The hydro users of Ontario can't afford it.

The government will tell us that when Hydro One becomes an independent corporation, they can no longer give the Auditor General jurisdiction, but that simply is not true. I'd like to remind them that they managed to do exactly that with the Technical Standards and Safety Authority in 2009. They introduced and passed legislation which would give the auditor the authority to investigate the TSSA and access to documents, even though the TSSA is an independent, not-for-profit corporation, is not a government agency and the majority of the board are not appointed by the province.

Under this proposal, the government will be prohibited by law from selling more than 60% of Hydro One. That's what it says in the budget. But unfortunately, that only works if the government respects our laws. For instance, when we were in government we passed a law to ensure that if Hydro One was sold, the proceeds had to go first to pay down the remaining debt. This was to protect taxpayers to ensure that a future government didn't go on spending sprees and leave taxpayers and hydro users stuck with the debt and no asset.

However, this act would amend that law so that the minister has the ability to put as much of the proceeds as he wants into general revenues, which means that the government gets their spending spree and the people of Ontario will be stuck with the bill.

Hydro isn't the only cost-of-living-and-doing-business increase under this government's proposals. This bill will continue the implementation of the ill-advised mandatory pension program. The government likes to talk about this pension like it's free and that people are winning the Cash for Life lottery, but the reality is that every dollar that goes into the pension program is being deducted from hard-working Ontarians or taken from an Ontario business. It's money that otherwise would have gone to paying the bills, paying down the mortgage or making sure that the kids had new, warm clothes for the winter. It's money that these businesses could use to expand and create new jobs or, in some cases, use to just stay in business and keep contributing to Ontario's economy.

Recently, I had the opportunity, through surveys, to ask both my constituents and businesses in my riding about the proposed pension. Seventy-eighty per cent of my constituents who responded said they can't afford to pay 1.9% of their income into the proposed pension program. They recognize that this isn't free money. It's money that is coming out of their pockets.

Is it really up to the government to decide how this money is to be spent? Is it really up to the government to decide that it's better investing in this pension scheme than paying down the mortgage or paying down the credit card, which they're paying 19% interest on? Is it really going to leave people in Ontario better off if implementing the pension costs jobs, as the government's own documents show it will? Ninety per cent of Oxford businesses said they would be impacted by the proposed pension plan and most of these said the impact would be significant.

In the same survey, I also asked businesses about a carbon tax and 86% of the respondents said they would be impacted by it—negatively impacted by it, I might add.

The Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure stated that this carbon tax will take money out of companies' hands and put it in government coffers. He said it would take money out of our economy.

In jurisdictions where they've tried it, a cap-and-trade system has not led to significant emission reductions and this type of system has proven to be easily manipulated. This tax would drive up the cost of every product that my constituents use.

Already the Premier said that consumers can anticipate an increase of 2.5 to 3.5 cents a litre on gasoline under this proposed plan. This is from the same government that said there would be minimal impact on hydro rates from the Green Energy Act. For people who live in rural areas, driving isn't a luxury. The minister may not understand that. It's a necessity to go to work, to get the groceries. It is another increase in the cost of living that they can't afford. I believe in protecting the environment, but I don't believe that the solution is to tax everything. I don't believe the people of Ontario can afford that.

Earlier I pointed out that despite the \$2.4-billion increase in spending, municipalities are again seeing cuts in the municipal partnership fund grants. The government will claim that they are supporting municipalities through transit but, on page 49 of the budget papers, it states, "The province encourages municipal partners to explore financing tools, such as asset optimization, to help ensure these projects may proceed." That means they're going to force municipalities to sell assets to finance transit. Not only is this government selling the house to buy a fancy sports car, they are forcing municipalities to do the same thing.

There are also a number of other changes in the budget and this bill that impact municipalities. For instance, section 41 amends the Taxpayer Protection Act to allow the minister to increase fees in unorganized territories without a referendum as long as it's done by January 1, 2017. This is the first step in property land tax reform. The government will tell us that this is something that municipalities have been asking for, but that's not completely accurate.

What municipalities have been asking for is recognition that those adjacent to unorganized territories incur costs from residents of those areas. Many people from

unorganized territories use community centres, libraries and long-term-care homes. Some municipalities supply emergency services to residents in unorganized territories. In one case, the mayor pointed out that on one built-up road residents on one side are in the municipality while the other side is unorganized territory. Their fire trucks don't stop because the person who called is on the wrong side of the street.

The government has committed to PLT reform and increasing the amount paid by the residents in unorganized territories, but nowhere in the speech at ROMA or in this budget do they commit to giving those increased revenues to the municipalities who are incurring the costs.

1610

I wrote to the Premier, asking for this commitment following the Good Roads/Rural Ontario Municipal Association conference, and we're still waiting for a reply.

The government is promising consultation, but northern municipalities have heard that before. What they need is a commitment that the government isn't going to raise costs for people in unorganized territories and simply put it into general revenue.

Also buried in the budget pages is a mention of the Power Dam Special Payment Program. Currently, hydro-electric generation stations in Ontario don't pay property taxes to their local municipalities. Instead, they pay a gross revenue charge to the province which, according to the Ministry of Finance, includes their property tax. The ministry then pays the property tax to the municipality through the Power Dam Special Payment Program. In fact, the 2014 budget clearly stated that the payments reflect the amount of property tax the municipality received before the stations became exempt from property tax. Last year's budget suddenly announced that these payments would be cut by 25%, with no warning. The government has promised to look at the long-term solution, but this budget demonstrates that nothing has been resolved. All the government has done is push off the decision, leaving municipalities under threat. We will be watching and working with the municipalities to ensure that there is a real solution to this problem.

Mr. Speaker, municipalities aren't the only ones who have to be concerned about what's hidden in this budget. For instance, look at schedule 14 of this bill, which weakens the rules around government advertising. Instead of leaving it to the good judgment of the Provincial Auditor and her office, advertising will now be judged on a narrow set of rules.

As the provincial Auditor General said, this would put her office "in the untenable and unacceptable position of approving ads because they conform to the narrow requirements of the amended Government Advertising Act, but may be clearly partisan by any objective, reasonable standard."

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you I've never had a constituent come up to me on the street and say that the Auditor General is being too strict on government advertising.

The government says that the auditor is being too picky, focusing on things like colour. Well, if you think colour doesn't matter, just ask my grandson. A few years ago, he declared that when he grew up, he wanted to be in politics, and he was going to be on the blue team, like Opa. The truth is that as politicians, we do think colours matter. If we didn't, our election signs wouldn't be in our party colours. The Liberals wouldn't wear red jackets at the plowing match and have red websites, and there probably wouldn't have been as much red in those ads that the Auditor General rejected.

In my recent survey, I asked companies in Oxford whether they were receiving enough information from government. The majority said yes, but the common theme was that they wanted more practical, fact-based information. One said he needed "clear info—not 'ads' about changes."

Mr. Speaker, Ontario can't afford a government that keeps spending with no regard for deficit or debt, and we can't afford a government that ignores no-cost suggestions which would have made sure tax dollars were spent more efficiently. I want to give you three examples that could have been implemented in this bill.

Last week, I pointed out again the huge burden of red tape and reporting facing our municipalities. One, I pointed out that Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, adds more reporting requirements onto municipalities—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Emie. Member from Oxford.

There are only 20 people in the room, and 18 of them are talking, and there's a little group over here too. Can we keep it down? I'm having trouble even hearing him, and he's close to me. Thanks.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Municipalities are facing spiralling insurance rates, paid for with taxpayers' dollars that could be used to fix roads or build transit. The government could address this by reforming joint and several liability, but they refuse to take that action.

The third example, and one I have raised in this Legislature many times, is the waste and abuse at the Housing Services Corp. For those who don't know, social housing providers in Ontario are required by law to purchase natural gas and insurance through the Housing Services Corp. The problem is that HSC funds their operation by overcharging for their services, and it adds up to millions of dollars that should have gone into providing housing for vulnerable people. Instead, this money is going to world travel and investments such as a shell corporation in Manchester, England, and for-profit solar companies here in Ontario.

All of these items could have been addressed in this budget. All of these items could have made tax dollars go further and wouldn't have added a single dollar to the significant deficit.

Mr. Speaker, in response to my recent newsletter, 89% of the people said they were concerned about the provincial debt. This budget does nothing to address that.



This bill simply puts forward measures that would increase the cost of living, increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and lower accountability and transparency. It's opposite to the requests our caucus has made. It's opposite to what groups like the chamber of commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business recommended. It's exactly opposite to what my businesses and constituents said we needed.

I hope that the government will listen to the people of my riding and the people of Ontario. I hope you will put forward a real plan to deal with the deficit, and I hope you will withdraw the plans to increase the cost of living and doing business in Ontario and stop forcing our companies and jobs out of this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It is indeed a pleasure to follow the member from Oxford. I know he was talking about selling Ontario Hydro. I have to tell you, I have a four-hour train ride every week back and forth to Windsor, and I've read the budget—all 400 pages of it, cover to cover. I came across phrases like “asset optimization,” “maximizing value” and “initial public offering.” I saw the phrase “broadening ownership.”

At least seven times I came across the Premier's new favourite phrase, obviously written by a Liberal-friendly consultant as part of a \$7-million outlay of taxpayer money paid to the government-friendly consultants who worked secretly behind closed doors on a propaganda plan to use smoke and mirrors to pull the wool over the eyes of Ontario taxpayers. What was that phrase, Speaker? No, not, “We will sell Ontario Hydro.” That would be too transparent. The phrase, Speaker, seven times: “We will unlock the value of certain provincial assets.” It doesn't even sound like, “We will sell Ontario Hydro.” “We will unlock the value of certain provincial assets.”

You can run on a campaign using that fuzzy-wuzzy language, but please don't come in this House and say, “Everybody in Ontario knew we were going to sell Ontario Hydro,” because they did not. They do not want to sell Ontario Hydro.

You will pay the price if you go ahead with this plan. Nobody in Ontario wants to lose their public power. The public power of Ontario hydro belongs to everyone in Ontario, not to the Liberal Party, and you should be ashamed for trying to sell it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** It's always a pleasure to participate in debates with my colleagues from Oxford and Windsor–Tecumseh.

I want to use the little time I have to talk about some good things in the budget that some people may not know about. One of the things that I think is fabulous is, for our students going to colleges and universities who have small assets, like a car or a little bit of part-time income, we're removing that barrier in terms of how income is assessed for purposes of the Ontario Student Assistance Program. That's fantastic. That's on top of, of course, our 30% tuition reduction program.

The other thing that I think has a lot of good news, and it's for small businesses in Ontario—I went through this in some detail myself, having held a couple of post-budget breakfasts, including with a board of trade group in Ajax and Pickering.

There are many initiatives. There's, first, a five-point small business energy savings plan in the budget.

There's a venture capital element, where Ontario contributes up to \$25 million to scale up ventures.

**1620**

There is the ongoing reducing red tape initiative through our Open for Business initiative.

We have focused on expanding small to medium exports and opportunities for small businesses to export beyond the US.

There is the helping restaurants and craft brewers grow initiative.

There are numerous tax measures to make Ontario's small business tax system more competitive.

There are, of course, our regional funds.

There are quite a few things that are really helpful to small businesses, because we know that small- and medium-sized businesses make up the majority of businesses in Ontario. I think they make up about 60% of our private sector employers in Ontario, so we need to support them through measures like this.

So I encourage people to look for those great things that help businesses—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm proud to stand for a couple of minutes and add my comments, following my colleague from Oxford county, MPP Ernie Hardeman. MPP Hardeman from Oxford is absolutely correct when he talks about the ORPP plan and how it's going to negatively impact the people in the province of Ontario, especially the small business owners across the province.

I also want to pay my respects and credit the NDP member from Windsor–Tecumseh on his very passionate two-minute remarks on this budget. He's absolutely right. Prior to the June 12, 2014, election, the people of Ontario had no idea what was in store for them. This Premier, Kathleen Wynne, did not campaign on firing nurses. She didn't campaign on selling public assets. She didn't campaign on having 817,000 students possibly on Monday—next Monday—out of the classroom because of a province-wide strike in the public education system.

This was nothing but a Liberal tax-and-spend budget that is adding \$2 billion more in fees. The media were quite accurate today that there's \$2 billion more in fees that are going to hit the pocketbooks of hard-working people in the province of Ontario. I think, like the member from Oxford said, this budget should have really put forward ideas to create private sector job growth in this province, not put forward the ORPP.

Also, I think this government needs to deal with the expensive Green Energy Act and the hydro prices, which are now the most expensive in all of North America.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I, too, would like to thank the member from Oxford for his comments on the budget. He's right in many parts of his analysis of the budget. We're supposed to see hundreds of billions of dollars of infrastructure money, but then, when you start to look at it, you see that this investment is going to be in areas of population growth. When you talk to representatives from northern Ontario or from rural Ontario, that means that's not for us. They're talking about this massive infrastructure money that is going to be collected, that we'll have to vacuum the pockets of everybody to have happen, including people from northern Ontario—and, in his case, from rural Ontario—but the investments are not going to come back to us, because there's that little part in the budget that it is targeted at areas of high population growth. Does that mean our roads and bridges don't fall apart like everybody else's? Of course not. They do. They need repairs, they need investments, but we are not going to be the beneficiaries of this—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** And you don't deserve a bus, either.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** And apparently, I don't deserve a bus, either. No. The Ontario Northland is on its way out, and now it goes right by some of my communities.

Then there is the sell-off of Hydro One for 3% of the cost of this mega infrastructure build. That makes no sense. To lose the ownership of an asset that allows us to do so much in economic development throughout our province for 3% of that plan? I don't buy it, Speaker. I don't think it has anything to do with—it has to do with privatization, clear and simple.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes questions and comments, and I return to the member from Oxford for his reply.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I want to thank the members from Nickel Belt and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, the Minister of Children and Youth Services responsible for women's issues and, of course, the member from Windsor-Tecumseh. Obviously, it was his comments that I was most taken by—his passionate rendition of the issues with hydro. I was sitting here thinking there was a reason why they didn't tell people during the election what they were going to do with hydro. You and I, looking at the big picture, may have a slight difference of opinion on that, but the reason they didn't tell people, of course, was because of how they were going to do it and what they were going to do with the finances.

Now, I just want to take it to the average homeowner: If you were going to sell your house to pay your bills, you would not tell your mortgage holder that you were doing that because then all the money would go to pay the mortgage before you could sell the house. They want to sell the house. They want to sell hydro without paying the mortgage against it. We're going to have a \$24-billion or \$27-billion mortgage against hydro that is owned 60% by someone else when this is finished.

Now, if they told anyone that, then of course things would fly apart. That would happen if you were selling

your house that way, and that's what should be happening here. If they're going to sell hydro, every dollar should go to pay the mortgage down, so at least the mortgage against hydro was not more than the value of what's left. It already is slightly more, and we don't want to make that even worse.

How could you possibly think, somewhere in that, when you have a mortgage twice the size of your value, that people are not going to pay extra for the interest on all that money in their hydro rates? Why should the people buying the hydro pay for this entity all over again just so we can have transit? Why didn't they just go out and borrow the money and put a mortgage on the transit they're going to build instead of selling hydro? At least they would still control hydro, and they would control transit in exactly the same way.

I want to thank all the people who responded to my presentation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I'm pleased to rise here today and do my 20 minutes on the bill on behalf of New Democrats. I'm going to start by revisiting some of the comments of our leader, Andrea Horwath, and our finance critic, the member from Kitchener-Waterloo.

This is a budget that fails our province and fails the hard-working families in Ontario. Ontarians didn't vote for this budget. The Liberal government's priorities in this budget largely resemble those of the Mike Harris Conservatives back in the 1990s. This budget fails families, it fails education, it fails health care and it fails the care of families' loved ones. The budget makes it impossible to find jobs for people in our communities, and it certainly doesn't make life more affordable for the hard-working families in this province.

Instead, we have a budget full of cuts—cuts to services that people in our province, the most vulnerable people in our province, rely on—and added burdens to household budgets.

The winners here are the windfalls for Bay Street investors, for the Liberal insiders, for consulting fees, for profits from the sale of hydro, and for tendering out RFPs on the ORPP plan instead of making sure that is a public pension plan where all the money is invested back to the people who most need that pension. It does nothing to address the thousands of manufacturing jobs lost in the sector or to help the half-million people who are currently out of work in this province.

I have an interesting email here from a fellow who actually has a factory in Welland, but he lives in St. Catharines. I think the minister without portfolio will find this one interesting because this factory owner called just about a month ago and wanted to know what was up with the debt retirement charge on his plant's monthly hydro bill. His manufacturing plant employs 18 people full-time. They operate Monday to Thursday, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Fridays, because he's a good employer and he wants to give his employees a little bit more time off on the weekend.



1630

Despite winter being his slow period of time, he saw his monthly bills rise from \$2,700 to \$3,500 a month, almost a 25% increase. He expects that they'll go to \$4,000 a month, which would be a 50% increase, when the plant gets busier this spring and summer. And that's even before the 42% hydro rate increases that have been announced for the next five years. He's finding this a squeeze. He is considering adjusting the hours of operations, but he doesn't want to move his production to night shifts. He doesn't want his workers to have their quality of life or family life interrupted.

The interesting piece is, though, he actually called the minister's office and they referred him to me—to call me in Welland—to take this issue to Queen's Park.

The Liberal government is proposing the sale of Hydro One, which will mean higher hydro rates, less reliability, no Ombudsman oversight, no FAO oversight, no FIPPA oversight, no Auditor General oversight, and an increase of more than the 42% already announced by this government.

I don't know about all of the members in this House, but certainly people in my community and in my fellow colleagues' communities are having trouble staying afloat. In some cases, people are being forced to pay their energy bills or actually buy groceries.

This budget is forcing Ontarians to pay for the billions of dollars that have been wasted in scandals and misplaced priorities.

I actually had someone ask me the other day how much the OPP investigations are going to cost this government and the people of Ontario. It will be interesting to actually see how those budgets become bloated, once those investigations are completed.

We're seeing today—as our public education system is thrown into chaos by the Liberal government—teachers, students and families being forced to bear that brunt of more cuts. The Liberals, of course, are trying to blame the educators, when it's really the educators who are just trying to protect the system that they have today, that will produce future generations and the leaders of the future here for the province.

Instead of supporting them, we've had mass school closures; we've had children on buses for hours, having to go out of their community to go to school; we've had EAs and teachers fired; we've had plans to increase class sizes; and we've had mass chaos, most recently, in our public school system. This is caused by the Liberals, not the teachers.

This budget cuts poverty reduction programs. It proposes selling off a hydro system—a publicly owned system—to Bay Street, and it opens the door for more privatization to come.

In fact, the Premier really has Mike Harris to thank for setting up her privatization of Hydro One plans. He was the one who laid the foundation that allows Hydro One to be privatized today. For anyone who has forgotten, it was Ontario Hydro that was then split into five successor companies under the Harris government.

But it's not just about me and my NDP caucus, who are so opposed to this plan. It isn't just about New Democrats. A recent poll in the *Globe and Mail* says, "A majority of Ontarians are against the Liberal government's plan to privatize Hydro One...."

A recent poll conducted by Mainstreet Technologies shows that 60% of respondents do not approve of selling off a majority of the public electricity company to the private sector. What's more, 77% said they believe privatization will increase electricity rates.

The article says that "the Liberals have tried to soft-pedal the Hydro One sell-off. They refuse to use the word 'privatization'—or 'sell-off'. Instead, they opt for these buzzwords and buzz-phrases like "broadening ownership," "unlocking value," or "modernization." You can call it what you want, Speaker, but at the end of the day, "privatization" means "sell-off," in this case.

Anyone who lived through the 1990s and early 2000s saw exactly what those repercussions were. They saw a big increase in hydro rates, that never decreased again.

The Premier has tried to downplay her Conservative-style hydro sell-off privatization by distracting Ontario with grocery store beer sales, but I have to tell you that my inbox has had one Beer Store story for every 100 hydro privatization emails in recent weeks. My inbox will tell you that Ontarians cannot be taken for granted, despite how desperately the Liberal Premier tries to sugar-coat it. Privatization is privatization, and it equals sell-off.

Each passing day, we're learning from the Premier and her Liberal government that they're taking pages from the Mike Harris Conservative playbook—the Common Sense Revolution, I believe they called it in those days. There's not much common sense about this plan.

To make things worse, the Liberal government is trying to ram this through and limit public consultation. I won't be surprised if there's a time allocation motion; there has been a time allocation motion for every bill in this House since we came back here in July of last year. It's bad enough that the Premier refuses to be straight with Ontarians about the sell-off of Hydro One, but now the House leader and the Liberals are going to try to limit public debate.

In fact, my House leader, the member from Timmins—James Bay, wrote a letter just last week to the government House leader asking them to reconsider the shocking time limits put on the discussion of not only the hydro issue but the budget bill in its entirety. Some of the most significant changes in Ontario's history are embedded in this bill, and we're only going to get very few days of hearings at this point, in Toronto.

I can tell you that there are people from Thunder Bay to Fort Erie and from Windsor to Sault Ste. Marie who want to talk about this bill and want to get on that list to make their presentations. The government has a duty to do wide consultation because this bill, this hydro sell-off, will be felt in all corners of this province. We live in a democracy, and this should be a democratic process for all the people who actually live in Ontario.

At the end of the day, about the hydro sell-off, even the Conservatives backed down 12, 13 or 14 years ago. For anyone on the other side who will argue otherwise, I would challenge the Premier and her government to have the committee travel across the province and hear from hard-working Ontarians.

The sale of Hydro One is wrong. It's the wrong thing to do. Privatizing was wrong more than a decade ago and it's still wrong today. We know this. Hydro rates went up 25% shortly after the Conservatives privatized the generation of power—25% almost overnight. That's why it ended. Nova Scotia privatized its hydroelectric system, and it now has some of the highest rates in Canada, almost rivalling the current rates—without the 42% increase already announced and the increases that will happen once the sell-off happens. This story has played out in many jurisdictions across Canada and the US. It's also worth noting that the energy rates now are three times higher than they were in the Harris era. There's no rhyme or reason for this sell-off.

I mentioned earlier that my inbox was flooded with emails about hydro privatization, and I'm hearing not just from individuals; I'm hearing from local sporting agencies and from curling clubs; I'm hearing from manufacturing people in my community.

I can tell you that when I go out to do my grocery shopping on the weekend, Speaker, I often visit Celi and Presti's deli in my community, and I visit Arcuri's Cheese World in my community. Each and every time I go in there, they say, "Cindy, to pay my hydro bill, which is \$1,500 to \$1,600 a month, I have to sell a lot of salami and a lot of provolone to just pay the hydro bills, before I even pay any of my employees or actually take a paycheck home."

I've heard from local manufacturers like ASW in Welland about how the hydro rates are actually hurting the company. I've heard from the Welland Curling Club in my community, who have made major capital investments in the curling club so that they can become as energy-efficient as possible, but every time they invest that capital, the Liberal government increases their hydro rates, so they're no better off than they were before they created those efficiencies. So this Hydro One sell-off isn't supported, really. I haven't heard anybody who's supporting it except Bay Street and Liberal insiders.

1640

Privatizing hydro will mean higher rates, we know that, and it will mean the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue—almost \$1 billion a year—for a \$4-million one-time hit. What are you going to sell when that's gone?

We've already seen the Liberal government waste billions of dollars at eHealth, at Ornge, the gas plant scandals to save a few Liberal seats, the Presto card rollout, \$8.2 billion in P3s. All of that money could be going to transit and to infrastructure in this province. So this privatization agenda has left behind, and will leave behind, a costly legacy of waste and scandal.

I want to move on to health care for a few minutes, because that's where I actually come from. To quote the

Ontario Health Coalition, "The real-dollar cuts across ... health care also mean damaging—and potentially irreversible—cuts, closures and privatization of needed health care...."

The RPNAO, the Registered Practical Nurses Association, makes it clear that front-line staff "will continue to suffer from increased workloads, stress, burnout and moral distress associated with watching in frustration as their patients fail to get the level and quality of care they deserve...."

We've had nurses fired across this province—I think almost 2,000 over the last two years—and we who work in the health care field know that every time you cut a registered nursing position, you increase the mortality rates for patients in this province. There have been a lot of studies on that issue, and so the government needs to take heed about that.

On top of the cuts to our health care system, the Liberal government is also implementing its fourth consecutive hospital freeze, so we in rural and northern communities are seeing our hospitals close. I spoke about this this morning: Already in my own riding and the member from Niagara Falls's riding—he is here today—we've seen Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital close, Fort Erie hospital close, Port Colborne hospital close, and now they want to close my hospital in Welland, even though it serves a population of 100,000 people.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Don't do it.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** We're not going to do it.

So just like people from rural areas where they have to travel three hours to deliver their baby, we're having those same kinds of situations, where they've consolidated those services in one hospital in the region.

No jurisdiction in Canada or any developed country has cut public hospital care to the extent that the current Ontario government has. It is unprecedented. We actually have the lowest per capita funding for public hospitals in this province than any province in Canada—the lowest.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Yes.

This fact underlines that they are choices by this Liberal government. They are not necessities; they can and they should be changed.

Natalie Mehra from the Ontario Health Coalition says, "For patients, it means spending days on stretchers in hospital hallways because there are no beds...." And if you met with the paramedics today, they will tell you that their job has changed dramatically over the years. Originally, they were put in place to address emergencies; now they can spend full shifts in emergency departments because of the cuts to the budgets of the emergencies and of hospitals in this province.

So, once again, the Liberal government seems to be taking a few pages out of Mike Harris's Common Sense Revolution:

—the creation of P3 hospitals, where for-profit corporations would finance new hospital facilities and operate the hospital support services. So how it works is that they lease them back to the hospital, and then at the end of 40



years you get a hospital that has not been maintained at the same standard that it would have been had it been publicly funded;

—the establishment of for-profit and diagnostic clinics for MRIs and CT scans;

—the firing of nurses.

I'm going to spend my last couple of minutes talking about privatization in the community, something else that originated under the Harris government but that the Liberals have had 13 years to change. You know, community care is still for-profit for the most part in this province. Right now we have 140 registered nurses and registered practical nurses in St. Catharines, Welland, Niagara Falls and Simcoe on strike, hired by Care-Partners.

Now, Linda Knight was a nurse and—she should be ashamed of herself—then became a banker. She has 14 for-profit agencies in this province. She made \$600,000-plus last year—\$400,000 in wages and \$200,000 in perks—that should have gone to patient care had the Liberal government, sometime in the last 13 years, moved back to a public community system.

These are the most vulnerable patients coming out of the hospital today. You know, in the old days, when a patient left the hospital and needed home care, they were four, five, 10 days post-op, depending on the surgery. Today you go in for a hip replacement, and you're being discharged the next day. The money that should be going to look after patients in the system is actually going to pad the pockets of CEOs who are making as much or more than the heads of our CCACs and the heads of our LHINS.

The NDP has said over the last few years that we should be capping public sector CEO salaries, and that is one way that we could actually reinvest back into programs. But when you have a community system which is actually providing a large amount of health care now in a for-profit system, a large amount of the money is actually going to profit and to padding the pockets of the people who get into that business.

In closing, I'm happy to have had the opportunity. I probably could have done another 30 or 40 minutes but I don't have that time, so I'm going to sit down now and let the two-minutes go on. We'll see how the rest of the day goes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Speaker, you've been in this House a long time. Please tell me I wasn't that negative in opposition. I guess I probably was that negative in opposition, because that's their role.

I'm just going to touch on a couple of things. I'm going to recommend to the member reading the book *Minding the Public Purse* by Dr. Janice MacKinnon, who was the NDP finance minister in Saskatchewan when the NDP closed 52 rural hospitals. They didn't do it to be mean. They didn't do it because they hate hospital workers or hospital settings. This is simply that the NDP, when in power, had to face the realities of office. So I

recommend to you *Minding the Public Purse* by Dr. Janice MacKinnon. I won't mention Frances Lankin's name because she is part of a policy that's being developed out there.

I do want to mention something very positive about my friend from Niagara Falls. As he knows, we don't face a Liberal-friendly media in the Niagara Peninsula or an NDP-friendly media in the Niagara Peninsula. So the day after the budget, the usual suspects were saying, "Well, there's nothing in it for Niagara." It wasn't the Liberal member for St. Catharines, it was the NDP member for Niagara Falls who on the radio the next day corrected them and said that Brock University had an investment of \$10 million for their new business school. He was correcting the others. That was very good news in the budget that many people have advocated for.

I want to take the opportunity to commend my friend from Niagara Falls for being fair enough to say to those who were saying that there was nothing good in it—we know the usual suspects—he was one who was prepared to be fair about it. I commend him for that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

1650

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** First of all, before I make comment on the member from Welland, 20 minutes ago Ryan's Law was given royal assent. It's officially law. It's a great day. For World Asthma Day, it kind of coincided, so I'm quite proud of that.

I'll just make a few comments on the budget. This is a budget basically of increased taxes and increased fees. You're seeing the debt go to \$300 billion and interest payments cranking \$12 billion a year, which at the end of the day—which the speaker did mention—will be crowding out services going forward.

In my riding alone, the orthopaedic surgeons, in January and February of this year, were unable to do elective surgeries on hips and knees—so anybody who needed a knee or hip replacement surgery during those two months wasn't allowed to. The reason was, there was no money for it. Well, if this government keeps spending money the way they're doing, there won't be any money for any surgeries, going down the road. That's quite a concern for the people of my riding.

Instead, this government decides in this budget to roll out their pension payroll tax that's going forward. They'll argue that it's not a tax. They can create the words how they want to, but taking money from somebody without their permission is either thievery or a tax, and on this government side, we'll balance which way it goes.

The other thing this government is going towards is selling off part of hydro in order to put the money towards infrastructure. To me, that's like selling your house and keeping the mortgage. I don't think there's anybody in this House who would sell their house and keep their mortgage in moving on. This is what this government is doing with this asset sale. They're not putting the money towards paying down the debt, which would reduce rates in our province. Instead, they're

taking that money and throwing it into infrastructure, particularly in the Toronto area, which has no benefit at all to the people of Elgin–Middlesex–London.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'd like to stand up and talk about the budget, but I'm going to talk about something that I think is very important, not only to my riding but certainly to Liberals' ridings right across the province of Ontario, and that's the auto industry. Going back to 2009, when I was at the bargaining table during the auto sector crisis, where the PCs were very clear and said, "Let the industry fail," we ended up coming together, including the federal Conservatives, the provincial Liberals and the Obama administration, on making sure that the industry didn't fail. We protected tens of thousands of jobs, both in the plant and the spinoff jobs.

The problem that you have with the budget is that you're going to sell off the shares, and that's a big, big mistake. I don't believe for a minute that what transpired in Oshawa last week—which happened less than a week after the federal government said they're going to sell their shares because they want to balance their budget and then the Liberal government sold their shares because they wanted to get close to balancing their budget or use that money for whatever. Here's what has happened since that time. A week later, 1,000 workers—listen to this; instead of talking about this, because this is important for the province of Ontario—are losing their jobs. They're going to lose their jobs in October and November.

The Liberal government was told very clearly by the leader of Unifor, Jerry Dias, "Don't sell those shares." You need to be at the table. You need to make sure that you're going to have a say in future investment in Oshawa, future investment in St. Catharines, future investment in Ingersoll and future investment in Ontario. When 1,000 people lose their jobs, who doesn't pay taxes? Anybody know here? Those workers don't pay taxes.

It made a big, big mistake in getting rid of the shares in General Motors. I really think they should reconsider that.

The last thing I want to do, real quick—I've got four seconds—privatizing hydro. I had the tourist industry—I guess I've got to sit down. I'll have to do that later.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Wow, the hyperbole has been thick and fast-flowing today.

I just want to take our attention back to some of the key things in this budget that residents of my riding of Newmarket–Aurora have told me are very important to the quality of their lives and their children's lives.

We start with renewing Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy. The province is renewing that strategy by investing an additional \$250 million over the next two years, bringing the total investment in youth employment programs to more than \$565 million. That is on the tip of the tongues

of many of the people who live in my area, whose children are graduating from colleges and universities and will be able to take advantage of that.

I think we've heard from a few people who are quite delighted that 450 grocery store outlets will be able to sell beer. Craft breweries are a growth industry. We have one starting in my community of Newmarket. We have another, the well-established King Brewery, in the township next to me. It's a growth industry and I'm glad to see that we'll be supporting them.

The Jobs and Prosperity Fund, enhanced by \$200 million—and I've heard from businesspeople in my community. They know it will attract more business investments, it will spur innovation and create jobs. We're bringing the total in that fund to \$2.7 billion over 10 years.

But as I did yesterday, let me just flip to some of the comments that others have made here.

EACOM Timber Corp.—just to prove that it's not a Toronto-centric budget, there are billions that are going to be spent outside of this area. Amongst them is \$60 million in resource road funding for the coming year.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our time for questions and comments. The member for Welland can now respond.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** To the minister without portfolio: I thank you for your advocacy on the Brock University issue. It was on the books for three years and that was a welcome announcement to Jack Lightstone and to the university.

To the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London: I'm glad he raised the issue of cancellation of surgeries, because that's happening right now, as I speak, in Simcoe, Haldimand–Norfolk, Welland and Niagara Falls because of the CarePartners' strike and the failure of the government or the CCAC to actually intervene and make sure that these people get back to work so seniors and the most vulnerable patients are looked after.

To the member from Niagara Falls: He raises a good point. The NDP have been calling on the government, both at the provincial and federal level, for many, many years for a manufacturing strategy in this province. It has fallen on deaf ears for as many years as I've been following this.

To the member from Newmarket–Aurora: It's just a shell game. At the end of the day he says that there's been more investment in youth, but in fact there was \$47 million cut from the youth employment strategy, right out of the budget book.

My final remarks will be that the father of health care and the father of hydro—Tommy Douglas and Sir Adam Beck—would both roll over in their graves knowing of the great erosion of public health care in this province and of the plan to sell off public power.

Thank you so much for the opportunity, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been more than six and one half hours of debate



on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader or his designate specifies otherwise.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** No further debate at this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** No further debate at this time.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to protect child performers in the live entertainment industry / Loi visant à protéger les enfants artistes dans l'industrie du spectacle vivant et l'industrie du spectacle enregistré.

An Act to protect pupils with asthma / Loi protégeant les élèves asthmatiques.

An Act to proclaim the month of October as Hispanic Heritage Month / Loi proclamant le mois d'octobre Mois du patrimoine hispanique.

An Act to require the establishment of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan / Loi exigeant l'établissement du Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I also beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Ms. Campbell assumes ballot item number 58 and Miss Taylor assumes ballot item number 61.

1700

Orders of the day.

## 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 5, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I recognize the member for Beaches—East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker. It is a great pleasure for me to stand to speak to this particular motion, that the House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government of Ontario.

What we are in a sense doing here is we're confirming a path that we set out on almost a year ago. On May 7, 2014, the writ was dropped for a general election in the

province of Ontario. It was a general election that was premised on the defeat or the lack of support for a budget that came forward in May that did not get the support of the House. It was a budget that we all knew was extremely progressive, and we were very disappointed in many quarters that the members opposite did not support that bill and we went to a general election. Of course, Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, I'm delighted to have had the opportunity to campaign on that budget bill, because it resulted in this opportunity for me to be in the House today.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, sir. I appreciate it very much.

We've heard so much in this House over the last motion about expanding the ownership piece in hydro. We take to the point. People say that's not—we're not saying we're selling it. Of course, we're not selling the entire entity. We're selling a portion of the equity in it, a 60% portion, and maintaining control, maintaining—

**Interjection:** Shares.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** —shares, of course, in it. And we continue to be a major shareholder in that entity.

We spoke yesterday, and in a two-minute response, I had a chance to talk a little bit about the economics. If you do follow the money associated with selling off a piece of the asset, the shares in that commodity, it does return \$800 million a year. If you understand the importance of a steady revenue stream, this is what gives it the value that allows us to unlock an asset in order to create greater value.

Those of you who have had a chance to spend some time in the business world know, for instance, if you were to build a storage unit on a piece of property and you fill that storage unit with paying customers who pay you on a monthly basis, you develop a revenue stream. The first thing you do as a smart operator is that you then finance that asset to the maximum you possibly can, because the stream of income covers off the cost associated with it, and then you use that asset that you've realized by opening up the value—you use that to invest in new projects.

This is precisely what we are doing with this bill. We're investing in new assets for the province of Ontario, particularly roads and bridges—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** —roads and bridges that will help the member from Windsor, because we're going to get people to his community, into the centre part of Ontario, faster. It will be good for transport of goods and manufacturing services in his community. It will be good for jobs in his community. But they don't understand the central nature of economics.

Now, we are premising the sale and realizing a \$9-billion return of revenues—we are premising it on the basis of a 5.3% return, which is about a \$15-billion value. In essence, you can borrow money, and in your bank accounts you're only getting 1.5% or 2%. You ask yourself, what would happen if the investors, when they

looked at that first tranche, thought, "What an amazing deal," 5.3% on their money? We might recognize, in fact, they might be satisfied with 4% return on their money, because 4% is a lot better than the 1.5% or 1.6% we're getting on our savings accounts. If the people of Ontario should embrace that opportunity, then that 4% return would actually generate a value of this company in the order of \$20 billion. If we were to sell and realize the revenue associated with 60% of that, that would return \$12 billion in new revenue that we could then use to expand in transit, rail access.

This is extraordinarily important, that we do follow the money, that we do realize the value on this steady income stream by putting that asset into more productive purposes elsewhere.

I've heard so much from the other side of the House about the 10% ownership piece. Well, let's be very clear. In our proposed section 48.2, it says very clearly, "Where any person or entity or combination of persons or entities acting jointly or in concert beneficially owns or exercises control or direction over more than 10 per cent of any class ... of voting shares, Hydro One Inc. shall promptly take steps under its articles of incorporation to remedy the situation." This tells us that we will maintain absolute control on the general directions, and we will realize values.

I'd like to turn over some more time to the member from Kitchener Centre.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm pleased to recognize the member for Kitchener Centre.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I'm very delighted to join the debate today on Bill 91, the 2015 Ontario budget. As you know, the document is called Building Ontario Up. The overall theme of this budget is that we are tackling really big issues that matter to the people of Ontario, and we are showing leadership.

I'm very enthused to see that this budget is not only building Ontario up, but specifically in my riding of Kitchener Centre and the region of Waterloo there are many great initiatives. I want to tell you about a few of these, Mr. Speaker. They're right in the budget for my community.

Now, I have sat down, and I've listened to the people of my riding: municipal leaders, those in the tech sector, people in advanced manufacturing, social services and our universities and colleges. They have told me that this is a very progressive budget. They want to see it passed. People in my riding and all over Ontario are going to begin to benefit from the infrastructure investments and other announcements that are there.

In my riding, the government has committed \$300 million for the construction of the LRT. It's now under way. The ION is going to be the region's rapid transit system. It's scheduled for completion in 2017, and I look forward to taking that first ride.

We have committed to \$2.1 billion to the Kitchener rail line to bring all-day, two-way GO train service to our region from Toronto.

Last fall, we announced that we purchased 53 kilometres of track between Kitchener and Georgetown, and

we're negotiating with CP and CN for track acquisition or other considerations to continue that from Georgetown to Toronto.

Mr. Speaker, despite some misinformation being spun by negative voices trying to confuse the facts, I'm happy to report to you that our plan to deliver on that commitment for increased GO train service to our region within a 10-year time frame is right on track. To the people who are watching at home, I say to you, look beyond the negativity that you have been hearing from some voices in our community. I have had assurances from both our Premier and our transportation minister that our region is a priority and that we are on schedule to bring more trains to our region.

So what is happening between now and then? Why does it take 10 years? Well, we're addressing grade separation, station modifications, track and signal additions and all the other important work that's necessary to meet this goal. There's a whole team of engineers working behind the scenes at MTO that are looking at this right now. We're delivering a plan while those cynical voices are delivering pessimism and they have no plan.

We're also going to be breaking ground later this year for the Highway 7 expansion from Kitchener to Guelph.

For our education partners, we're investing \$15 million in the new Lazaridis Institute for the Management of Technology Enterprises at Wilfrid Laurier University. Private investors are going to kick in \$20 million in that project. After the budget was announced, I had a chat with the president of WLU, Max Blouw, and he's thrilled. He wants to see this passed.

In my community, Communitech, a hub that supports tech business people to start and grow their business ideas, is continuing to receive support from our government. Since starting in 2006, they have helped launch—and I'm not kidding—1,800 new tech businesses equaling thousands of jobs. If you talk to the head of Communitech, Iain Klugman, he will tell you that he wants to see the budget passed. He likes this kind of investment, and he knows that it has triggered a profound transformation in my community.

I do want to wrap up by saying that municipal leaders, business people, those in higher education, social services and everyday folks from my region—they are watching. They're watching the way that we're going to be voting—in particular, MPPs from my region. They want to see this budget passed.

They want to know, do they support transit expansion? Do they support education investments, support for our social services? Or are you going to say no to supporting your community? They're watching, and I'm watching. I'll be sure to let them know how they voted on supporting Kitchener-Waterloo and all of Ontario.

We're committed to building Ontario up. A vote for this budget is a vote for the future of our province.

1710

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? The member for Prince Edward-Hastings.



**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. The member opposite who just wrapped up not only resembles the Premier in her appearance, but her remarks also follow closely in line with what the Premier says day in and day out.

As a matter of fact, she said her municipal leaders are watching with interest to see what's happening, and her businesses are watching with interest. I can tell you that my municipal leaders and my business community are watching with interest as well.

The message has been resoundingly clear: This is a bad-news budget for the province of Ontario, particularly in rural Ontario. Ask anybody in rural Ontario if there's anything in this budget for them, and they'll question what the government is smoking, because there's nothing in this for rural Ontario.

I'm going to have an opportunity to speak for 20 minutes on the budget motion in just a couple of minutes, after we get through the questions and comments, but I can tell you it was quite simple on this side of the Legislature: We were asking to see five things in the budget that came out a couple of weeks ago. We didn't see any of the five. As a matter of fact, some of them went entirely in the opposite direction of what we need to see, to get Ontario back on track again.

When I arrived in the Legislature, four years ago now, the budget deficit was virtually the same as it is now. This government has done nothing to improve the financial situation. Businesses are continuing to leave the province at a record pace, because electricity prices are going through the roof. It's the biggest issue—that this government failed to recognize in its budget—in rural and eastern Ontario.

I look forward to the opportunity to bring 20 minutes of very valuable, insightful remarks in just a couple of minutes, here in the Legislature.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know you're looking forward to it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'd like to make comments. The member from Beaches–East York was talking about his concerns over a steady revenue stream, so I want to talk about one of the steady revenue streams here.

They're going to start selling beer in grocery stores. I used to be a reporter. In 1985, I went around the province on the bus with David Peterson. One of his biggest promises was selling beer and wine in corner stores. Thirty years later, it's still a broken Liberal promise.

I'm not opposed to this, but let me sound a warning. Let me tell you about the Quebec example. Putting beer and wine in Quebec stores caused a devastating effect to the spirits industry in Quebec. Before beer and wine went into the stores in Quebec, the spirits industry enjoyed a 40% share of the alcohols market. Since the sales went in, spirits—rum, whisky, rye, vodka—dropped from 40% down to 13%. That led to closures of a number of Quebec distillers and the loss of hundreds of jobs.

Distilled spirits come from Ontario farms. They're Ontario grains grown by Ontario farmers. Ontario jobs

are on the thin edge of this budget if you don't treat the spirits industry fairly when you're talking about expansion of the markets for beer and wine and if you stick to limiting the sales of spirits.

Just to give you an example of a steady revenue stream, there is a billion dollars a year or more, that comes from the sale of spirits, that goes into the Ontario treasury. If you want to put that on the line, go ahead and do it at your own peril, but you must treat the spirits industry fairly if you proceed with your plan to put beer in grocery stores.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's certainly a pleasure to follow the very eloquent remarks of the members from Beaches–East York and Kitchener Centre concerning that great budget that was just presented by the Minister of Finance about 10 days ago, or something like that.

One of the issues that I hear about constantly from the members of the opposition—both parties—is hydro rates. I want to talk about hydro rates, especially with reference to page 361 of the budget. We all remember, as I'm sure the Minister of Agriculture and Food remembers, the Conservatives when they restructured the electricity sector in Ontario—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Well, I remember it well. The Conservative government allowed the electricity sector to build up a \$37-billion debt.

*Interjection:* Grant, say it isn't so.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It was \$37 billion, Minister.

At the same time, they came up with this idea to restructure the electricity sector, and in doing so, they created the OPG—Ontario Power Generation—the Ontario Power Authority and Hydro One. We all know that. Under their restructuring, they couldn't come up with \$7.5 billion, so they created a stranded debt, which has been on our electricity bills since 1999. The original stranded debt, in 1999, was \$7.8 billion. In 2003, when they froze the rates—the Conservatives froze the rates. They were trying to fool Ontarians about the real cost of electricity. They froze them, which resulted in an increase of about \$4 billion in the stranded debt, so it went up to \$11.5 billion.

In this budget, what we're going to do is, we're going to be taking the stranded debt component off your bills, off all the residential bills for the people of Ontario. That's a good-news item in this budget.

I'm proud of this budget, as are all of my colleagues, Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The mood of the House is rather jovial this afternoon, and it's very pleasant for those of us who are listening. But I still have to be able to hear the speaker, so I just caution members to lower the decibel level just a bit.

We still have one more opportunity for questions and comments. The member for Elgin–Middlesex–London.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I enjoy the member on the opposite side and the way he proceeded to try to bring up the

straw man in this debate. The real fact of the matter is that debt in this province is going up to \$300 billion, and the interest payments are going to crack \$12 billion. That's \$12 billion that isn't going to any programming in this province; it's just going to pay the interest on the \$300-billion debt.

To me, that is a way to drive services out of this province. As I mentioned earlier, the fact is that orthopaedic surgery was cancelled for two months in my riding because of this government's mismanagement and waste throughout the years: \$2 billion for eHealth, \$1 billion for the smart meters, \$1 billion on the gas plants.

Where does it stop? When is this government going to realize that you just can't continue to spend your way into prosperity? It does not happen in this province. What happens is too much money is tacked on to the debt.

The member from Etobicoke Centre's sister had a baby today. Unfortunately, that baby has been born into \$23,000 of debt. The first moment she took a breath, she was \$23,000 in debt, and with this government continuing going forward with budgets like this, it's only going to increase.

I feel sorry for the next generation going up because the services that we enjoy today will not be there for them, because this government will not take the right path and ensure that the debt and deficit get under control. Instead, this government wants to play around and move items through smoke and mirrors and tell the people of this province that there are no new taxes.

They can seriously look at me without smiling and say that there are no new taxes in this budget. We've got the cap and trade, we've got the payroll tax, we've got an increase in the aviation fuel tax, we've got a new beer tax—come on, really. You guys are—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** He's yelling about my hospital, Elgin General. A re-announcement from when I first ran in 2011; that was when the announcement really first came out. But of course, during this budget period—I'm running out of time—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** One of the government members who spoke has the opportunity to respond.

I recognize the member for Kitchener Centre.

1720

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I want to start by thanking the member for Beaches—East York for his comments; the member from Prince Edward—Hastings—yes, I thank even you; the member for Windsor—Tecumseh, whom I know very well; the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, who has just disappeared; and the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Now, the member for Prince Edward—Hastings made the remark that I seem to resemble the Premier. I want to thank you very much for that. I think it's always a great compliment to be compared to people who are intelligent, thoughtful and forward-thinking, so thank you for that.

Speaking of forward-thinking, I would like to transition us back to our budget. It has four pillars, and you've

heard these. It's starting with the investment in infrastructure and transportation. We're also investing in people's skills. We're focusing on dynamic innovation and business. This is very important to the people in my riding of Kitchener Centre, where we have seen an investment in our tech community from this government and we have seen an explosion in the tech sector of thousands of jobs. And we're making sure that all Ontarians have retirement security. All of these investments are looking at building Ontario up.

The cornerstone of our values is the reason why I decided to join this team. It is a commitment to a very fair society. I've heard lots of people talking about different things having to do with infrastructure and other aspects of the budget, but for me, what I'm concerned about is our concern that we have for helping people who are in need.

To sum up, I would like to remind everyone that our community leaders who are leading our municipalities, people in business, people in social services, are watching us. They're watching in my community of Kitchener Centre. They're watching how all of us in Ontario are going to be reflecting on this.

I hope that we can positively pass this budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on the budget motion here this afternoon.

I don't know where to begin except to say to the member from Kitchener Centre that you will pass the budget because you have a majority government, so there's not much question about that. But it's our duty as the official opposition and the third party to enlighten the people of Ontario about the shortcomings in this Ontario budget.

Yesterday I actually had the opportunity, during the lunch hour, to visit the Canadian Club of Toronto down at the Hilton. I had a lovely meal down there and listened to a finance minister who is actually taking the country in the proper direction—that would be “Joe the Balancer,” the Minister of Finance, Joe Oliver, who hails from right here in Eglinton—Lawrence; he's the member for Eglinton—Lawrence. He balanced the budget, and yesterday talked about how we're taking the country in the right direction, but it's this province that keeps dragging down the national economy.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member for Essex to please come to order. I'm going to ask the minister responsible for tourism and recreation to come to order, and then I hopefully will be able to hear the member for Prince Edward—Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** And I'm not generally a quiet guy, Mr. Speaker, so I'm surprised that you were having difficulty, but my colleagues are very excitable here this afternoon.

As I was saying, “Joe the Balancer,” as he's been dubbed on Parliament Hill, has set the country in the right direction. But it's this government—and this



Minister of Finance and this Premier who continue to be the albatross around the neck of Confederation.

As I was saying earlier, when I arrived here four years ago, the deficit was \$12.5 billion—you'll remember that, Speaker. So what's happened since? We got it down to \$9 billion, \$9.5 billion, and the next year it went to \$10.5 billion and now it's back up to \$10.9 billion. We're headed in the wrong direction. So while the federal government was getting it right, bringing our costs in line and ensuring we could be one of the most competitive countries in the entire world, our province continues to go in the opposite direction and drag down the national economy.

Do you know the third-largest area of expenditure in this budget, Mr. Speaker? It wasn't in health care. It wasn't in education. It wasn't in social services. It was in interest on the debt, increasing by 5.7% in this budget. We've talked at length in this House about the Auditor General's report and the fact that if we continue to build our debt bigger and bigger and bigger, the interest payments are going to go higher and higher and higher. What does that mean? We're going to start crowding out the programs that are so important to our most vulnerable people in Ontario. That's what has been happening. That's what has been happening in Ontario.

We now spend more on interest on the debt than we do on energy, infrastructure, transportation, universities, and community and social services. All of those ministries are spending more on interest on the debt. The \$54 million that the federal government transferred to the province for health care has all but disappeared. For me and my constituents that would be and could be a new hospital in Prince Edward county, in Picton, or a lot of new equipment and a lot of new beds in the old hospital.

I've been advocating, as you do, Mr. Speaker, when you're sitting in your chair, for highways and roads and infrastructure in our communities, but that wasted money isn't going to any of those projects. We could build five Rednersville Roads with that \$54 million. We could build that five times. That's a road that stretches across the north shore of Prince Edward county.

The debt and deficit are now costing us the things that we care about, with the AG again telling us last year that we have a government that has decided that instead of fixing the problem, they've continued on this same reckless path that we're on.

The Premier and the members of the government over there want you to believe that the government has to spend outrageous amounts of money in order to deliver services, that it has to employ thousands of people who never see a patient and have never seen a patient in order to deliver health care. That was one of the asks that we had leading up to the budget this year: streamlining our home care, streamlining the delivery of health care in the province of Ontario.

We now have the local health integration networks, and we've been talking about the LHINs for a long time and the fact that it's an added layer of bureaucracy. We have 14 LHINs. We have 14 community care access

centres, the CCACs that are delivering a service as well, but require an administration and another form of bureaucracy. Now we have the community health links that were reintroduced in this budget—69 of those across the province. It seems like every time the government stands up, absolutely, they're spending more money on health care. But are they doing it properly? Are they doing it wisely? Are they streamlining the service? Clearly, they're not. They continue to add more and more bureaucracy.

The government said in the 2014-15 budget that it expected to need only \$3.1 billion from asset sales in order to fund its infrastructure program. They keep saying that it needs to sell Hydro One, because it can't balance the books any other way. That's an important point. Not a dime of the sale of Hydro One is actually going to infrastructure. Remember: Last year, they said they needed \$3.1 billion from asset sales. This year, it's saying that it needs the \$4 billion from the sale of Hydro One, plus the money from the sale of government real estate in order to finance its infrastructure program.

Our finance critic, the member from Nipissing, has done an excellent job of holding the Minister of Finance and the Premier and the government's feet to the fire on this issue, because they're misleading the public when they say they're taking the money from Hydro One and using it for infrastructure. Clearly, they're not.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd ask the member to stand and withdraw the word that starts with an "m."

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Absolutely, I withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** What was the word?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm not sure either, but I'm sure he'll tell me later.

I forget where I was, but—

**Interjection:** Start all over.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Should I start from the beginning, Mr. Speaker? No, okay, okay.

The thing is that we're obviously headed in the wrong direction when it comes to the sale of Hydro One—that's where I was. What they are doing is changing the laws around the sale of Hydro One. According to the Electricity Act, they are supposed to be using the proceeds of the sale of Hydro One to pay down the debt that the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell was talking about earlier, that \$27 billion in debt. They're not doing that.

1730

What they're doing is selling off a very profitable asset and not using the proceeds the way that they should, because if they did start to pay down that debt we would start to see lower hydro rates. I will get to that a little bit later on.

The thing is, you can only sell these assets once. There have been mistakes made along the way, but selling Hydro One will only lower the deficit for one year. Next year, you've already spent the money that you got from the sale, you haven't fixed the underlying problem with

the deficit and now you're getting a smaller dividend from Hydro One because you have a smaller ownership stake in Hydro One.

The government, it appears, is hoping that it can make up the money through either increased economic activity or by selling more beer, neither of which is exactly a promising plan for balancing the books in the province. Clearly, what we're seeing is that the price of hydro continues to rise, which is going to make us less profitable. It's going to create more of an exodus to southern states.

We had the perfect example of what's happening in all of our rural ridings. That was illustrated this morning by the member from Haldimand-Norfolk, who talked about the fact that one of the manufacturers in his riding is being lured away with the carrot-dangling of three cents per kilowatt hour, an industrial power rate in a southern US state. We all, on this side of the House—and the member from St. Thomas is here—know that the manufacturing sector has been hollowed out and, in large part, won't be able to return because of the increasing costs of electricity in the province.

In 2003, when this government took power, we had the lowest hydro rates in North America. Now, 12 years later, we have the highest all-in hydro rates in North America.

The member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington is a very studious lad. He went out and had the legislative library look at the all-in cost of hydro for all 10 Canadian provinces. By far, the price in Ontario is the highest—three times what it is in the province of Quebec.

It's a problem, and there's nothing in this budget that's going to address that. As a matter of fact, on May 1, May Day, it indeed was “mayday” last Friday, when the price per kilowatt increased by 15% right across the province.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It's Cinco de Mayo today.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It is Cinco de Mayo. Happy Cinco de Mayo to you, Percy.

Normally in this province, when the dollar is down you notice that our economic activity increases because we're exporting more of our manufactured goods into the US. The problem with that is that we've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs over the last 10 years in the province. Most of that is directly related to a steady and then astronomical increase in those hydro rates during that same time period.

In what will apparently come as a shock only to members of the government, manufacturing is an electricity-intensive process in Ontario. Many plants run on continental shifts, which means they're running 24 hours a day. That means they're being charged rates at-peak, mid-peak and off-peak. The government's attempts to fix its energy mistakes by manipulating prices and trying to engineer when we manufacture and when we do laundry aren't working. They aren't helping anything. As a matter of fact, we just saw 1,000 jobs leave General Motors in Oshawa. We've seen Kellogg's, Caterpillar, John Deere, Heinz and dozens of others pull up stakes

and leave Ontario. Two weeks ago, we saw Goodyear turn its back on building a new facility in Napanee. The reason was because of the soaring costs of electricity and—not just that—the instability of the electricity system in Ontario.

The government's electricity policies have made it all but impossible to generate the kind of economic activity that we would need to balance the budget. Again, on the Goodyear Napanee situation, they didn't leave for Quebec; they left for Mexico.

We have a budget without a credible plan to balance that is privatizing assets, that's relying on economic activity it has successfully driven out of the province and on an increase in beer sales in supposedly 450 grocery stores across the province.

To be sure, electricity is a major reason that these manufacturers are leaving, but it's not the only one. Businesses are constantly looking to operate more efficiently. They're looking for more cost-effective ways to do business and more business-friendly jurisdictions. Capital is more mobile than it has ever been in the province's history. The government's solution to this has been to repeatedly make it more expensive to do business here. We've watched the Green Energy Act produce the highest electricity rates. Now businesses in the province are being hit with a double whammy in this budget. On the one hand, they'll be expected to pay a new payroll tax that the government is trying to pass off as a pension plan, from which few people will actually benefit.

The next thing manufacturers are going to be hit with is a cap-and-trade tax; that is, unless they or their industry have hired expensive Liberal lobbyists to make them exempt from this new program, or they pull up stakes and move elsewhere.

Ultimately, all cap-and-trade systems become a lobbyists' dream, because there are always loopholes written in that exempt certain industries, or increase the number of credits they have, or do whatever the government can do to engineer the credit market in favour of whoever has the best lobbyist. This keeps cap and trade from being effective.

But the other thing that ends up occurring—and this was raised in the pages of the *Globe and Mail* over the weekend—is that it ends up incentivizing manufacturers to move their more carbon-intensive operations to other jurisdictions that don't have cap and trade so that they can stay under the cap. They do that so they can sell their remaining carbon credits on the market and increase the profit margin for the company, which has little impact on greenhouse gas emissions here in Ontario.

What you have is yet another Liberal policy whose major result will likely be offshoring thousands more jobs that used to be right here in Ontario. What we have is a measure that makes it more expensive to produce in the province, and a measure that makes it more expensive to hire in Ontario—this, while the government is relying on increased economic activity to help it balance the books. The government's own advisers in the Ministry of Finance have stated that they expect these measures to cost the economy of the province thousands of jobs.



But let's get back to the deficit and why it's not going away.

What we've done is highlight the problem with planning on an increase in revenue by continually adding taxes to businesses. This is because Ontario doesn't have a revenue problem. Year over year, Ontario continually sets new records for how much revenue the government brings in. What we have is a results problem, not even a straight spending problem. We're spending too much money on things that don't deliver value. Instead of trying to reform the system to deliver better, more cost-effective results, we're crowding out government priorities to pay for an ever-growing debt load.

As a result, we have a government that has laid off 400 nurses province-wide, including 58 registered nurses—at my hospitals; in my riding—at Quinte Health Care. That's hospitals in Picton, Belleville, Trenton, North Hastings and Bancroft. As a result, we have \$54 million in federal transfers for health care that isn't going to health care.

As a result, we now have thousands of kids out of class in Durham, Peel and northern Ontario, and we're probably going to have thousands and thousands more out of class on Monday.

People don't get angry when the government does too much, but they do get angry when the government does too many things poorly, and that's what this government has done. Rather than trying to get the fundamentals right, they think the solution is to simply spend more money; it's to spend \$130 billion on transit and transportation; it is to announce that it's going to open beer kiosks in supermarkets.

Over the last few decades, the people of this province have made it clear, what they want the government to do. They want the government to provide quality health care. They want good roads, and they want them taken care of. They want good schools for their kids, and they want their kids to be able to get jobs at the end of their education.

We have a few basic and fundamental trusts that we are not only expected to deliver, but the public will demand that we deliver them. On many of those scores, this budget and this government are failing the province. The worst part is, this government pretends it either isn't occurring, or it criticizes those who point out that it is.

I've never seen a Premier so blatantly criticize the province's Auditor General. When she points out there are problems with the province's fiscal plan, which she does every time she addresses the media, this Premier is always there or her energy minister is always there, criticizing her findings.

I've never seen a Premier who thinks that bringing up things that happened in 1999 or 2001, after her party has been in government for 12 years now—I've never seen anything like this. It forces me to ask how long you have to be in government before you actually have to take responsibility for what you've done over the past 12 years. In no private sector job could you consistently blame someone else for your mess-ups 12 years after the person left the job. This Premier does it almost religious-

ly. It's an article of absolute faith for this government that regardless of what they mess up or who criticizes them, they will either attack the source or they'll blame Mike Harris—or periodically Bob Rae, as well.

1740

Part of being a grown adult is the ability to take responsibility, but this government never takes responsibility for anything. The responsibility for the hollowing-out of Ontario's manufacturing sector falls squarely at the feet of this Premier, this government and the previous Premier. The responsibility for the mess that the electricity sector is in with regard to both customer service at Hydro One and the price explosion facing ratepayers lies squarely at the foot of this government. The responsibility for the fact that this government now has to pinch pennies in front-line health care and fire nurses lies squarely at the feet of this government. Those decisions are the direct result of this budget, of recent budgets and decisions made by this government that their pet projects are more important than nurses in Belleville, Trenton, Picton and North Bay.

Somewhere along the line, this government made the decision that it could ignore these public trusts, provided it never simply took the blame for it, or provided that it take on what occurred and receive the same credibility as that of an independent trier of fact, like the province's Auditor General. This government's idea of facts is often in conflict with reality, as we saw last week when the Auditor General released her report on winter road maintenance.

I could go on and on and on. This budget doesn't encounter a single problem that it can't ignore. In fact, it makes a number of the problems in Ontario worse.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your time this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I was pleased to listen to my colleague the member from Prince Edward-Hastings. He has a booming baritone voice that's easy to listen to; however, the content of his speech was vacuous at best. There was not much in there, and I'll tell you why: It is difficult for the PC Party to condemn any of the aspects of this budget—because essentially they are the same, ideologically speaking. They are very similar documents. They fire roughly the same amount of public servants. They cut roughly the same amount of public services. They extol the same virtues in terms of reducing the debt on the backs of working-class people.

He spoke about the virtues of the finance minister at the federal level, somebody who has taken on the veterans of this community, of our country—who has attacked veterans, on the backs of those who put their lives on the line. They're balancing the budget on the backs of the environment. They're degrading our environmental resources.

Guess what they're doing with employment insurance at the federal level? They are taking from that pot and putting it into the budgetary deficit, making their numbers come down. Guess where they got that playbook from?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Where?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Paul Martin and the Liberals. It's exactly the same plan. So it's very difficult for the PCs to criticize this budget—because they are essentially carbon copies of the same document that I would expect from the PCs. What we have here on May 5, Cinco de Mayo, on a historic day in this country when we will see Alberta turn a new page and welcome in the New Democratic Party—what we see is that playing out here in Ontario, where we have a semblance of the Wildrose Party and, of course, the mirror image of the PC Party. We will certainly be able to offer an alternative. We already have. What do we do? We just absolutely don't do what the government has done and what the PCs would do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Agriculture. It's almost like you were up speaking already.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to say I did listen to the speech from the member from Prince Edward–Hastings. I just want to get on the record today that I'm a member of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment regimental association. As you know, that very fine regiment, after they left Italy in December 1945, joined the First Canadian Army in Holland, and 70 years ago, the members of that regiment were instrumental in the liberation of the people in Holland, which is a very important historical moment for that regiment.

Last Friday, I had the wonderful opportunity to be in Belleville, Ontario. I'm very sad, as a Junior A hockey fan—my Peterborough Petes had one of the greatest rivalries in Ontario, with the Belleville Bulls. I went to the Yardmen Arena and I saw the Belleville Bulls logo there, and it almost brought a tear to my eye that they'll be leaving Belleville and going to your hometown, Mr. Speaker, of Hamilton, Ontario. As you know, one of the greatest players ever to come out of the Belleville Bulls is with my Montreal Canadiens: P.K. Subban, who played his junior hockey in Belleville. I think the member there was the radio voice of the Belleville Bulls when P.K. Subban was playing there.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thanks so much.

Let me get to his speech. I met with the mayor of Belleville last Friday: Mayor Taso Christopher. You know what he had to say to me? He said, "Jeff, your government is on the right track with that budget." He said, "You're investing in infrastructure. You're investing in skills. You're investing in the kind of things that Ontario needs." I said, "Mayor Christopher, I'll pass that on to my good friend the member from Prince Edward–Hastings, and I'll set up a lunch between you and the member so the mayor of Belleville can share the good news with the member for Prince Edward–Hastings."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Lambton.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour again to speak, I think for the third time

today, to comment on the budget bill in front of us and to follow the comments of my friend in the NDP from Essex and, of course, the minister from Peterborough but most importantly from my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings, who really did a very effective job of highlighting what is wrong with the budget bill and the budget this year presented by the Liberal government.

Of course, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings talked about the repercussions of 12 years of Liberal mismanagement, the waste and the scandal. It's catching up to the people of Ontario. We're losing the front-line services that every person in the province of Ontario, whether it's the mom and dad with young kids at home or the seniors on a fixed income—they're seeing, like the member from Prince Edward–Hastings said is happening in his community of Belleville, front-line cuts to hospitals.

I can tell you, Speaker, that in Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, my riding, there are three rural hospitals. There's one in Newbury, which is Four Counties Health Services; one in Wallaceburg, the Sydenham hospital; and in Strathroy, Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital. All those communities are faced with front-line health care cuts as well as in the long-term-care homes. There's no investment by this Liberal government, and the budget didn't do anything to deal with that issue as well, Speaker.

I want to highlight the one economic issue that I continue to hear about by far the most in Lambton–Kent–Middlesex: that of hydro bills and the skyrocketing costs of energy. It's something that this government has been ignoring for years and years, but they have to deal with this issue at some point in the near future.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Let me surprise everyone. I want to say something good about the budget—not that I'm going to support it. They're putting money in It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Nine years ago, a priest, Father Charlie Sylvestre, pled guilty to 47 counts of sexual abuse. A friend of mine, Mary Ann Mulhern, wrote a book of poems about that. Let me read a couple.

#### Nine-Year-Old Girls

to the prosecutor  
the priest blamed  
nine-year-old girls  
after all, it was  
short skirts they wore  
to school  
how they sat on chairs  
long dangle of legs  
their mouths open  
to receive communion  
pink tongues  
soft and moist



## Can't Be Right

in the rectory  
it's a party  
chocolate bars and pop  
loud music  
the beatles  
maxwell's silver hammer  
one tin soldier  
stay awhile  
two classmates  
fold Sunday bulletins  
at the oak table  
in the hall  
Father Charlie lifts me  
onto his lap  
in his big black chair  
beneath a window  
with red velvet drapes  
he says he'll be my favourite uncle  
that I'm special

1750

he points to his cheek  
a kiss  
points to his lips  
a kiss  
points to his tongue  
I try to move away  
his arms became a trap  
hands move  
under my blouse  
beneath my skirt  
inside where it  
doesn't feel right  
can't be right  
must be right

he's Father

Speaker, this is a great book of poetry by Mary Ann Mulhern. It brings to life the 47 counts of the women who were abused.

I thank the government for putting money into this budget. This is Sexual Assault Prevention Month. There is an action plan in there with money to stop things like this happening in the future. I thank you for your time this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Prince Edward-Hastings has two minutes.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thanks to the members of the Legislature from Windsor-Tecumseh and Essex. We'll be watching Alberta tonight as well to see if the NDP can do any better than they did in Prince Edward Island last night, just to see. I don't believe they got a single seat in PEI. I think they will fare better in Alberta.

To the member from Peterborough: Thanks for the comments on the Hasty Ps, obviously a huge part of our history in Belleville and in Hastings and Prince Edward counties, and in Peterborough too. Of course, it brought

more than a tear to my eye when the Belleville Bulls announced that they were leaving.

Also thanks to member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

I can tell you that while I wasn't at the OSUM conference, the Ontario Small Urban Municipalities conference, on Friday, I was there on Wednesday, and I had the opportunity to address some of the delegates who were there. I'm going to have to check with Mayor Taso Christopher to see if what the member from Peterborough actually said is accurate.

But I can tell you that the member from Northumberland-Quinte West—his mayor in Quinte West was very unimpressed with the Premier. As a matter of fact, it was even in the newspaper how unimpressed he was with the budget and with the Premier's announcements on the day that she was there on Friday.

I can tell you that the warden of Hastings county—I have the newspaper report right here. Warden Rick Phillips: unimpressed. He says there's "not a lot of substance" there, when speaking of our Premier. He also said there's a lack of real government action on the rural municipal infrastructure file.

There's a lot of flowery language, is the way they put it, to summarize. There are a lot of sweet-sounding items in the budget, but there's no content behind these issues. That's why we won't be supporting the budget this time around.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for allowing me to speak here today.

I'm very excited to stand here and speak about this so-called progressive budget. This is a budget that is supposed to represent this party governing from the activist centre. The problem is, as many representatives have pointed out in this House, this budget is anything but progressive. This is a budget that is filled with senseless cuts that hurt the people of this great province.

When we think of being progressive, we think of providing proper health care to the people of this province, making sure that our education sector is strong, not on strike, and working well and ensuring that the residents of this province have every chance to grow and develop that they can.

When I look at this budget, there are major concerns that jump out right away. Let's talk about what's missing from the budget for the people of my riding, in Niagara Falls. The big one is GO train. During the last election—and the Liberals should listen to this—when the Liberal Party was trying to get votes, they said bringing GO train to Niagara was a high, high priority. Do you know who said that? The Premier of Ontario.

I'm sure, as you're all well aware, the chair of the Liberal cabinet, the MPP from St. Catharines, Mr. Bradley himself, said that he could see GO train coming to Niagara Falls in 2015. For 21,000 commuters who make their way to Hamilton every single day, this would be great news. It would be great news for the 50,000

people who travel from Niagara to the GO station areas that service Toronto.

This is also important. It's important that you listen to this: Manufacturers like General Motors and Airbus Helicopters could be happy knowing that the QEW would be less congested and that transportation routes would be clear.

The tourist industry was happy to know that visitors from Toronto could come and spend the weekend in Niagara Falls. The wine industry in Niagara-on-the-Lake—I know some of your ministers were there last week. Places like the Caroline winery, Two Sisters and Ravine could expand their booming businesses by bringing in international tourists. Award-winning craft breweries like Silversmith and Oast would have a chance to get their incredible product to an even wider audience.

I know the minister is here.

The racetrack in Fort Erie could thrive on new visitors, and it would be easier for people who will want to come when the Canadian Motor Speedway project is completed.

You can see that my entire riding is looking for GO Transit, yet when you pick up and read the 2015-16 budget, there is absolutely nothing in there for GO Transit to Niagara Falls. To think a government might say one thing to get elected and then change their mind when they actually start governing—I want you to listen to this, because I can defend this: Now we're told that they're waiting for a business case from Niagara, and I thought that was fair. They've been given that business case, and I believe it's a very strong case for a cost-efficient way to clear the QEW and for the environmental minister, who is here, to get cars off the road and bring development to Niagara. Yet we haven't heard anything—no new announcement, no new funding—nothing. The budget continues to have a hole in it.

The people in my riding have presented a case to this Legislature. It's a case for economic development, an environmental case and a public transportation case. In all of these cases, the province benefits from what is a very small portion of the budget. Yet that isn't there. The people of Niagara, hoping to utilize this transportation, were completely left out. The entire Niagara region, for the first time in years, is united behind this. There's no reason this can't be in there. For the amount of economic activity it would bring to the region and to the province as a whole, it should be your first page, but it's not even in your footnotes.

There are a lot of things in the budget that I disagree with—that most progressives disagree with—but there are also a lot of concerns over what is not in the budget.

Of course, the budget is about deficit reduction, and that's absolutely important. As the provincial government, we need to be fiscally responsible. We can't be dropping a debt onto our children and our grandchildren that they have no way of paying off. There are a number of things we can do right away to chip away at this deficit.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Please listen to this, rather than talk, because it's important.

Just look at the Auditor General's report, which shows that this province overpaid \$8 billion—that's a "b"—by using P3s instead of publicly funded models. In Niagara, the GO train would cost \$130 million. That's nothing compared to the \$8 billion lost on these P3s. If we want to balance the budget, we need to start by being financially responsible, by being transparent and accountable. These P3 projects have failed the people of this province, and they've wasted a lot of taxpayers' money.

I think I've got a couple of minutes left, Mr. Speaker.

This government may say that it's accountable and transparent, but all you have to do is look at the Auditor General's report on winter highway maintenance to see that it hasn't been happening. This government trusted a private contractor to clear our roads. There was very little oversight and almost no follow-up to make sure this job was being done properly. The report proves that the job wasn't being done. There was no accountability. For all of this danger that may have caused people in this province to lose their lives on our highways, this government saved over \$30 million. Is that what it's worth to put lives in this province at risk—\$30 million?

On top of that—listen to this—there are over 200 lawsuits pending against the province for injuries and death that have occurred on our highways. You could have saved more money by just having it publicly done, the same way they did in Manitoba—publicly run, publicly delivered. Their highways are safer and everything—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. You'll continue another day.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's 6 o'clock. This House stands adjourned until 9 tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*



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Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
		Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
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Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
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la politique sociale**

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Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short



*Continued from back cover*

## **Hydro rates**

Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4091
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4091
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4092

## **Visitor**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4092
-------------------------------------	------

## **Correction of record**

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4092
---------------------------	------

## **Visitors**

Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4092
Hon. Mitzie Hunter .....	4092
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4092
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4092

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4092
-------------------------	------

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Liberation of the Netherlands**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4092
--------------------------	------

### **Children's mental health**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4093
-------------------------------	------

### **Midwifery**

Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4093
-------------------------	------

### **Cremation services**

Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4093
-------------------------	------

### **Lyme disease**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4093
--------------------------	------

### **Events in Ottawa—Orléans / Événements divers à Ottawa—Orléans**

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4094
---------------------------------	------

### **First responders**

Mr. Todd Smith .....	4094
----------------------	------

### **Etobicoke city centre**

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4094
----------------------------	------

### **Faith communities**

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4095
-----------------------	------

### **Financial statements, Auditor General**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4095
-------------------------------------	------

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

### **Standing Committee on Government Agencies**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4095
Report deemed adopted .....	4095

### **Standing Committee on Social Policy**

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4095
Report adopted .....	4095

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4095
-----------------------------	------

### **Probation Officers' Week / Semaine des agents de probation**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4096
------------------------	------

### **South Asian Heritage Month**

Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4097
---------------------------	------

### **Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4097
------------------------	------

### **Probation Officers' Week**

Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	4098
----------------------	------

### **South Asian Heritage Month**

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4098
----------------------------	------

### **Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4098
-------------------------	------

### **Probation Officers' Week**

Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4099
------------------------------	------

### **South Asian Heritage Month**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4099
-------------------------------	------

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Special-needs children**

Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4099
--------------------------	------

### **French-language education**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4100
------------------------	------

### **Pesticides**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4100
--------------------------	------

### **Hospital funding**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4100
--------------------------	------

### **Employment practices**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4101
------------------------	------

### **Winter road maintenance**

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4101
------------------------	------

### **Poet laureate**

Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4101
--------------------------	------

### **Dog ownership**

Mr. Todd Smith .....	4101
----------------------	------

### **Gasoline prices**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4102
--------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4102
--------------------------	------

### **Alzheimer's disease**

Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4102
--------------------------	------

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### **Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4103
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4106
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4106
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4106
Mme France Gélinas .....	4107
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4107
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4107
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4110
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	4110
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4111
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4111
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4111
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4112

### **Royal assent / Sanction royale**

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott) .....	4112
---	------

### **Private members' public business**

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott) .....	4112
---	------

### **2015 Ontario budget**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4112
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4113
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4114
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4114
Mr. Grant Crack .....	4114
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	4114
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4115
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4115
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4118
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4119
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4119
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4119
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4120
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4120
Debate deemed adjourned .....	4121



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 5 May 2015 / Mardi 5 mai 2015

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### 2015 Ontario budget

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4067
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4070
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4070
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4071
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4071
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4071
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4072
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4075
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4075
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4075
Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4076
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4076
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4076
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4077
Debate deemed adjourned .....	4078

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4078
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4078
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4078
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4078
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4078
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4078
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4078
Mme France Gélinas .....	4078
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4078
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4078
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4079
Mr. Harinder S. Takhar .....	4079
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4079
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4079
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4079
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4079
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4079
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4079
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4079

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4079
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4080
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4080
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4081
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4081

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4081
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4082
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4082

### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Michael Harris .....	4082
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4082

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4083
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4084

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4084
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4085

### Correctional facilities

Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4086
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4086

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4086
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4086

### Midwifery

Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4087
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4087

### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4088
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4088

### Teachers' labour disputes

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4088
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4088

### Workplace safety

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4089
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4089

### Long-term care

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4089
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4089

### First responders

Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4090
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4090

### Sexual violence and harassment

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4091
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4091

*Continued on inside back cover*



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First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 6 May 2015**

**Mercredi 6 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 6 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 6 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 5, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Niagara Falls had the floor when we last dealt with this issue, so I will now recognize the member from Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I think I'll start by saying, what a wonderful election result in Alberta last night. I'd like to congratulate them. Equally important was the number of women who were elected. So, congratulations; I'm certainly pleased about that. I think we're finding out that orange is the new black—just throwing it out there for everybody to discuss this morning.

There are a ton of other examples where these P3 projects have cost the province far more than they have given us. Look at the local CCAC in the Niagara region. Instead of providing top-line health care themselves, they're contracting in-home care to a private company called CarePartners. CarePartners' CEO, Linda Knight, is okay to sit back and collect hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money while she refuses to pay nurses for their working hours or give them sick days. So, of course, the nurses, who are concerned about the level of care that their patients can receive under those conditions—which is really important on that issue—have unfortunately gone on strike.

This government has a mandate to provide top-of-the-line medical care to its taxpaying citizens. Instead of trying to intervene and help, they're unfortunately sitting on the sidelines while another privatization plan fails. Those nurses want to see their patients. I spoke with the patients, who are determined to get their nurses back. Yet still nothing is being done. I don't think this would qualify as good public service.

I want to say that I have talked to the health minister about this issue. I have raised it with him. That's the way we should be doing it in here. I raised it: "Here's what happens. Here's what has happened in my home community." I've talked to the member from St. Catharines

as well. But I think it's important to communicate that. It's one thing to stand up here and throw darts; it's another where you stand and say, "Listen, I've talked to you guys. This is what happened."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It would be interesting if the Liberal Party would at least listen to me this early in the morning. I think it's important.

These are nurses. These are people who are qualified. These are people who care about their community. They're people who care deeply about their patients. Yet what we're doing here is putting them on strike.

What they decided to do with this company, very clearly, is that they decided to join a union; they're trying to get their first collective agreement. I've been involved in the trade union movement for a long time. The decision for joining a union is usually because the employer is not treating their people with respect. It's been 18 months.

What happens, as everybody knows—we've been talking about this with the budget—is that you get this pot of money; you have so much money to go around. So, money goes to the LHINs, the LHINs take their money and give it to the CCAC, and they have that pot—the pie is getting divided up all the way along. What happens is that the CCAC gets their money, the CCAC then contracts it out to Linda Knight and here's what happens: That pie is smaller. She's taking her money off the top—she's making her profit—but unfortunately none of that is going to the nurses.

These nurses, if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker—I know you're interested in this—are working as piece-workers, getting paid so much for each house they go to; quite frankly, qualified nurses taking care of my parents, your parents, your grandparents. And at some point in time—I look around, and there are a lot of people in here with white hair—they're going to be taking care of us. We shouldn't be treating nurses like this. We certainly shouldn't be treating patients like this.

So if the other side can do anything—if my good friend Mr. Bradley can do something and say to the health minister, "Take a look at this. What's going on in St. Catharines is wrong. It's wrong how the nurses are being treated. It's wrong how the patients are being treated. It's wrong how the St. Catharines community is being treated." And CarePartners goes right across the province of Ontario. We have to fix this situation. We have to treat our nurses better, and we certainly have to treat health care better.



We were promised a new hospital in Niagara. It's now looking like it will be about 10 years away. I've met with the NHS; I've met with the health providers. You can see, at the site where the planning grant was announced over a year ago—almost a year and three months—that the sign is starting to fade. It doesn't look good at all.

This hospital needs to be built to service the people in my riding, and it can be a lot cheaper than the one that was done in St. Catharines. We can have a debate on whether that's where it should go, but there is no reason that we should be waiting. We have local workers who can get this project done now.

The point I'm getting at here is that it's a responsible approach that can help balance the budget by not wasting tax dollars. It seems too simple that it shouldn't need to be said, but these P3 projects prove that it does need to be said. These are happening. Where, exactly, are our savings coming from in this budget?

Let me tell you a few things that this so-called progressive budget has done in the province. While this government was using costly P3 projects, this budget was also being drafted to find other ways to bring in revenue. It began by using what they are calling asset optimization, which is essentially selling off the future of the province for the debts of tomorrow.

One of the ways this so-called progressive budget brought in extra cash—I spoke a little bit about this yesterday—was by selling the province's share in General Motors. Think about that. The federal government did the same thing—the federal government to balance their budget; the provincial government because they needed the money.

As many of you know, the province and the federal government negotiated a manufacturing footprint in 2009. As the car companies were being shocked by failures in the industry, the government came to the plate to make sure they didn't collapse. It wasn't a direct giveaway. Stipulations were in place to ensure that thousands of jobs were saved, that jobs were saved right here in Ontario that benefited the people, and collective bargaining was protected.

0910

It also gave the government—this is important; I think both parties should listen to this—a seat at the table, a big seat at that table. I know this because I was there in 2009 when the negotiations were happening. I can remember who supported those auto jobs here in Ontario and who wanted to see those companies fold and leave this country. I can tell you, it gave this province a big say over the future of the automotive industry here in Ontario.

With the footprint agreement coming to an end in 2016, auto manufacturers are looking to see what we can do to remain competitive and keep the jobs here. Well, that makes sense. When you have shares in a company and you have a seat at the table—and that's important, particularly at the bargaining table. With a seat at the GM table, we could, and we should, be a strong voice for the thousands of auto jobs in the province and the tens of thousands of spinoff jobs that rely on the auto industry in the province of Ontario.

Someone looking into this budget must be looking for the government to play a strong role in protecting the auto jobs here in Ontario—well, unfortunately, they won't find anything like that in the budget, and I think it's a mistake—instead of this government selling off their shares of GM in a one-time deal that removes a large part of their influence in the industry. We made some money off the deal, but the long-term effects are devastating.

Look at Oshawa, where they announced just last week that they're going to lose 1,000 auto jobs. A thousand jobs doesn't sound like much, until you talk to everybody who understands how the auto industry works. In particular, in Oshawa, we have all the spinoff jobs. You can argue whether it's 7,000 spinoff jobs; you can argue whether it's 10,000. But you're not talking 1,000 jobs now; you're talking somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 jobs.

I know my good friend over there, the economic development minister, is keenly listening to this conversation, because it's important for his job as well.

Does anyone believe—and I'm asking my colleagues this—it was coincidental that these job losses follow the sell-off of the GM shares from the federal and provincial government? Was the one-time payout worth losing what those 1,000 workers—and with the 7,000 to 10,000 spinoff jobs. So we're looking at between 7,000 and 11,000 jobs that you're going to lose in taxes. Is it worth it for a one-time hit when you could have a say at the table? One thousand people with decent jobs and fair wages now have to worry about their work.

This was an incredibly short-sighted opinion, and one this government should not be proud of. Perhaps it helps to manage the deficit for one year, this year, but what does it do for the future of the province? Because we're talking about a sector that is extremely important to the province of Ontario, and there are other sectors in the province of Ontario that are equally important, whether it be tourism—it doesn't matter what it is; there are other sectors. But this auto is what we've really been based on in manufacturing.

I know my good friend the Speaker is listening to this, because he comes from steel. They've been going through the same type of stuff that's been going on in the province.

I believe many people will remember this budget as one that sold off the public hydro assets, if something isn't done right now to reverse that decision. Just look at the sale of the GM shares, the sell-off of our hydro assets in Ontario—a short-term solution that hurts us in the long term, that selling 60% of Hydro One will amount to 3%. Now think about that: 3% of this government's planned infrastructure projects—3%. We'll be losing a payout of hundreds of millions of dollars every year because of this.

It may have helped to remove part of the deficit this year, but in years to come, the province and its residents will not have that continuing revenue stream to spend on their communities. Simply put, it's a sale of the future of this province.

Where did that hydro money go? I know everybody's listening. Where did it go? I think we all should be proud of that. Where did it go? We've owned it for my entire life. People who are older than me have owned it longer. Where did it go? It went for health care, our publicly funded health care, which is admired around the world, by the way, and gives us a competitive advantage right here in the province of Ontario.

One of the reasons why we had a successful auto industry and steel industry was because of our health care costs, because it was publicly funded and publicly delivered. We're making a mistake on moving into the privatization of it, and that's a big concern. But at the end of the day, it was publicly funded, publicly delivered, and it came from the revenues from Hydro One.

What else did it fund, Hydro One? Our education sector, one of the best in the world. We're going through some tough times right now with strikes, but at the end—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm done already?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You're done.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Oh, sorry.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I was here this morning to listen to the remarks from my friend from Niagara Falls.

I want to just talk about General Motors for a moment, because in my community in Peterborough we have a large number of people who have been employed over the years at General Motors in Oshawa. I have a large group of retirees. I met with the retired management group and the retired folks from Unifor. One of the things they told me—it's interesting enough: The competition between Canada and the United States has really pitted the United Auto Workers in the States against Unifor workers and General Motors here in Canada. I'll spend a moment to talk about this because both sides have told me about this.

After the bailout in the United States and Canada, the UAW decided to renegotiate a whole series of collective agreements for their folks at work in Michigan and other states where General Motors operates. The UAW put into place a set of collective agreements and a framework which is radically different than what Unifor has here in Canada. The minister who has been working with General Motors said that General Motors in Oshawa have said that in terms of a new product coming there—we all hope it happens—in effect, it's going to be predicated on the next round of negotiations with Unifor. That's what they've said publicly. We want to make sure that they happen in a positive way.

There's no question that the North American Free Trade Agreement has changed the whole footprint of the auto sector here in Ontario. We're all concerned about it. We all want to work together. We want to bring those good ideas to the table to make sure that we retain the auto sector right here in the province of Ontario, and I want to make sure that we work together on this important file.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It was nice to hear the member talk about some of the issues of the bill.

It's interesting. When I hear the minister across talk about the issues with Unifor—and I suppose Unifor is a big part of what's happening here at GM in Oshawa—but so often, they're always looking elsewhere and blaming somebody else. They have to; I guess that's part of the role. The economic plan for this province has been altered, negatively, so badly. We look at the payroll taxes. The car companies are telling—everyone who leaves is saying, "Get your energy under control." It's hard when you still hear this government talking about us being actually very favourable on the cost of energy.

To me, you have to stand up and tell the people what's actually happening. We see a province that's no longer competitive. Instead of looking at ourselves and looking at our payroll taxes or energy costs and the property taxes that are really a result of this government's policies—I would hope, listening to the member here talk about the labour negotiations, that they would actually take that as part of their strategy: to talk about what it would take to make our companies competitive. They have as big a stake in it as anybody.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's bad enough I've got the other side with four conversations with two opposition members over there. And I've got opposition members talking loud right in front of the guy who's speaking in their caucus. You've got four or five conversations going on—loud conversations. I don't know why you can't sit beside each other and whisper. I can hear your voices right here. So if you could just keep it down, I'd appreciate it. Thanks.

Continue.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thanks, Speaker. As I say, the point being, it's everybody's issue here. We have to work collectively to put a system in place that promotes business to stay in this country and hire good jobs.

0920

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The member from Niagara Falls spoke well and effectively about the impact on health care and the cuts in this budget.

But I want to address further the substantial cuts to tax credits and supports for the film, video and digital effects industry. Apparently what's in the budget now is expected to result in a 10% reduction in film, television and video production. That's a lot of jobs. That's thousands of jobs. It's bad enough, but the cuts apply to productions that are already in midstream. So the people who signed contracts and who are part of international productions suddenly find that they have a big hole in their budget. That presents profound problems for this industry, going forward.

I talked to an actor yesterday at a reception about the bill to protect child performers, an actor who told me that



the cuts have meant that the series she is working on is going to be shortened so they can fill in the hole. This means a loss of jobs.

But more than that, I've talked to people in the film and video industry who say that the refusal to grandfather existing productions says to the world that you can't depend on Ontario, that they're not credible, that we don't have a stable environment to invest in.

As bad as the immediate effects will be from the reduction of finances, the bigger problem is that we could be seen as an industry where it's not safe to put your film money. For 10 years, we suffered from the impact of SARS. We don't want another lost decade. The government has to address this grandfathering issue to protect our industry.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's a pleasure to be here. I appreciate the comments and the debate that has been ongoing in regard to our 2015 budget.

I appreciate the comments made by the member from Niagara Falls. Again, he reinforces something that I think we all have to be mindful of, and that's providing incentives and support for our industry so that we can create those jobs, jobs that are created by industry.

Part of that is embedded in this plan, in terms of investing in skills and talents, and also investing heavily in infrastructure, to the tune of \$130 billion over the next 10 years. Part of that is our Jobs and Prosperity Fund, which enables us to attract and provide incentives.

Another one is maintaining a very dynamic and competitive business climate. We have one of the lowest corporate income taxes and small business taxes anywhere in the world, for that matter, on average. Certainly, we're ahead in North America.

But I find it passing strange that the NDP suddenly are talking about providing loopholes and incentives for business, like the film industry—which, by the way, Ontario continues to be one of the most generous in the world. So you either want us to provide stimulus for those investments and for those businesses or you do not. On the one hand you're saying, "Cut away with loopholes. Stop providing any supports for businesses." But when it comes to supporting the auto industry, suddenly, "Yes, that was a good thing to do," or when we're supporting the film industry, "Yes, that's a good thing today."

But you can't have it both ways. Either you are onside, and you recognize the importance of maintaining a very competitive and dynamic business climate to attract investment or you don't. Oftentimes, the questions are about not supporting business, not supporting those that actually do create those jobs. That is the essence of what is in this budget—and we will continue to do so. The results have proven themselves.

I know that the other side of the House seems to suggest that Ontario and Ontarians themselves aren't doing their job. In fact, they're doing a tremendous job. We are exceeding targets all around the world, recognizing that Ontario leads now, most of Canada, with GDP growth.

That's not by accident. That's because of the hard work and the investments that we're making, and we'll continue to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Niagara Falls has two minutes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** That's an interesting statement coming from the finance minister. I want to tell you, sir, very clearly—as clear as I can—you shouldn't sell the shares in General Motors. We need an auto strategy in this country. We need one protecting steel. We need one protecting our shipbuilding. It's not just one sector. I have not talked about just one sector. I don't know where you're getting that from.

Our hydro costs are out of line.

But I want to address the comment made by one of the ministers around "The UAW contract is radically different." It absolutely is not true. If you take a look at the costs between the UAW and the Canadian Auto Workers when it comes to productivity, when it comes to quality, when it comes to a highly skilled workforce, when it talks now, when we have an 82-cent dollar—which probably should be about 78 cents—when you talk about those things and our health care advantages, it's actually as cheap or cheaper to build that auto part right here in Canada. So you're mistaken on that part, that's for sure.

The other thing we have to do is you need a seat at the table. That's why I talked about the shares. You had a lot of shares; a lot of money. You had a lot of say. You had a lot in the game. When you gave that away to balance or to get some money for something else, it made no sense.

I know that you guys have worked with the auto sector. I know you've talked to Unifor. Unifor has been in your office; I think they were in your office this week. They came and they were begging you not to sell the shares. It made absolutely no sense.

I've been at the bargaining table a lot over my career, and I know how important it is to have a say at the table. You also need a dance partner when you're at the table, but at the end of the day, the government would have had a lot more influence in what's going on in Oshawa today. We're losing 1,000 jobs.

I'd like the finance minister to look at me, because I want to tell him that we had the opportunity to get 1,000 jobs in Windsor; we came to the table late. I'm not blaming anybody here; I'm saying we have to be smarter.

We have to make sure that our kids and our grandkids are going to have a future in the province of Ontario. We have to get in the game. We have to get an auto strategy, we need a steel strategy and we need a shipbuilding strategy. Let's put Canadians and Ontarians back to work.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time, with your indulgence, with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the MPP for Barrie.

I'm really pleased to have an opportunity to make some remarks related to, obviously, what I believe is an

incredibly strong budget for all people of Ontario, but it's nice to be able to bring a northern Ontario perspective to it, particularly with a number of my colleagues from northern Ontario here, because this truly is a budget that is very much about creating jobs and about increasing economic growth. And I think there's almost no better example of where we can show that than in how much the budget recognizes the needs and the economic opportunities in northern Ontario, and that's reflected in a number of important ways.

It's hard not to start with the very, very important commitment we made related to the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, a program that has been incredibly significant in terms of reducing energy costs for major resource development companies—mining, forestry, the seal sector—by up to 25%. To have a commitment to make that a permanent, ongoing fund of up to \$120 million a year is absolutely huge.

We know that industry obviously responded very strongly to it because industry, more than anything else, in terms of making decisions related to investment, certainly seeks certainty. This, I know, from my discussions with them since we were able to make that announcement and since it was formalized in the budget. So thanks so much to the Minister of Finance; it has meant a great deal in terms of future opportunities in northern Ontario. That's absolutely huge.

Really good news related to our Moving Ontario Forward \$31.5-billion budget figure, \$15 billion of which will be going to build up our infrastructure outside the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—certainly we hear about the incredible needs in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. And we also know that the buildup of public transit is going to be of benefit, may I say, to the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay, already a plant that has a manufacturing facility that employs about 1,400 people, and it may be continuing to grow that employment as public transit needs go on.

In terms of the infrastructure needs in northern Ontario—I speak as the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North. My colleague from Sault Ste. Marie is sitting beside me; my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin is across the floor, let alone Nipissing and certainly my colleague from Thunder Bay—Atikokan. When we're speaking to our municipal leaders in particular and talking to business and industry about creating jobs, it really is about infrastructure needs. It's about roads and bridges, and it's about highways.

I'm very excited about the fact that, for one thing, our northern highways budget—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm sorry; the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane. I don't know how I could miss you, sir—a good friend, indeed.

0930

I think we all agree that the increase in the northern highways program—\$580 million, up from \$527 million last year—is really, really important. Over the last 10 years, over \$5 billion has been spent on the northern

highways program. To see that increase is incredibly important. To see priorities put on four-laning projects, certainly in terms of Highway 69, Parry Sound to Sudbury, Thunder Bay to Nipigon, is incredibly important to me as well. We also view as a priority the four-laning between Kenora and the Manitoba border, and we're hoping to continue to move forward on that. These are important. I know also that we ultimately want to see four-laning all across northern Ontario, something that we would love to see some more from the federal government on.

There are so many other things, and I can see already that I'm running out of time.

May I say, particularly with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure here in the House with me as well, that the Jobs and Prosperity Fund is an incredibly important fund. It has been raised from \$2.5 billion, I believe, to \$2.7 billion. Now it actually includes the forestry sector. That's huge, in all Ontario contexts. Obviously, many of the forest products companies are truly moving into an innovative new phase of production, and that's the key, I believe, to them being able to access the Jobs and Prosperity Fund. That is huge.

Speaking of the forestry sector, congratulations and thank you to the Minister of Finance. Thank you to the Premier. Thank you to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. The forest access roads program funding has gone up to \$60 million from \$38 million. Again, I think any of our northern members will tell you how important that is to the forestry sector in northern Ontario. This is something that means a great deal to all of us.

I will continue on for a few more minutes, if I may, because this also is an overall reflection of something that I've been proud to be able to say from the moment Kathleen Wynne became Premier on, I believe, February 11, 2013.

**Interjection:** Good memory.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I remember the day well.

Premier Wynne made it very clear to all of us in our caucus, all of us in government, that indeed northern Ontario was going to be a real priority in a Kathleen Wynne government. That has been reflected, obviously, in this particular budget, but it has been something that has been very, very important.

I know that the Premier—I think it's okay to say this—will be heading up to the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities annual general meeting to speak with them, as will many of our colleagues. We understand how important it is to be able to meet with them and be able to tell our story, and actually have an opportunity to listen to the concerns that are there. I suspect that some of my colleagues will be there as well.

Premier Wynne has made it clear to all of us how northern Ontario really may indeed be the economic future. In that regard, it's hard not to reference the Ring of Fire. In the mining sector in general, we're darned excited about the fact that we've got new mines opening up every year in northern Ontario.

We've got two of them opening up this year: Goldcorp's Cochenour expansion—their mine is opening up



and being commissioned this year, very soon—and Rubicon, the Phoenix Gold project up in Red Lake, as well. There are other projects that are coming close. We're pretty excited about the Premier Gold/Centerra partnership in the Geraldton-Greystone area.

The commitment and recommitment, may I say, of \$1 billion for infrastructure for the Ring of Fire is absolutely crucial. Again, it's something we would love very much to see matched by the federal government. That's a huge part of the long-term vision our government has for economic development.

Before I sit down—and I suspect they're going to be asking me to give my time up soon to my colleagues—I think it's also important to point out that getting the Connecting Link Program back up and running has been crucial for municipal leaders in northern Ontario, as a reaction to the downloading that was done many years ago. There are a number—this is important—in Sault Ste. Marie. In fact, we were able to make the announcement. My colleague the Minister of Government and Consumer Services—the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie—and I were there with the Minister of Transportation to announce a \$15-million program.

I'm getting the sign to get off the stage. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. This is truly a good budget for northern Ontario and for all of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Speaker, as important as it is to listen to what members of this chamber have to say about the budget, be they Liberal, Conservative or NDP, I think it's also important to hear what the general public is saying about our budget away from this place, so let me just run through a few comments from the citizens of Ontario.

The mayor of Sault Ste. Marie: "Our roads need work, our aqueducts need work. We're all aware that our water infrastructure needs some work. The budget was good news in that sense."

The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce: "From a Thunder Bay perspective, of course, wherever there is transit investment, there is an opportunity for Bombardier to increase their timelines and their productions, which is a good thing for creating jobs here."

I rather like this one from the president of Unifor, Dominic Pasqualino: "I think it's excellent news. It's going to solve Toronto's congestion problems and, if Bombardier gets some of the new contracts, it's going to be a real boost for Thunder Bay's economy."

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce caught my interest: "The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce applauds the Ontario government for formalizing its commitment to a fully funded rapid transit project in Hamilton in the 2015 budget tabled today."

Let us hear what the mayor of Barrie says: "The government is doing better than forecast on containing costs, so the deficit is smaller than forecast, which is good."

The Kitchener-Waterloo chamber of commerce: "There are no increases in (business) taxes. That's always a good thing."

The Canadian Environmental Law Association: "The Canadian Environmental Law Association welcomed confirmation of the recently announced Ontario Electricity Support Program in today's provincial budget. This program will provide much needed relief to low-income families ... where too much of their family income is eaten up by energy costs."

Let's have another look here at one from Sault College, an important post-secondary education centre: "There's money in there for aboriginal learners, and 21% of my students at Sault College are aboriginal. That's something I would applaud the government for doing. They also put in \$13 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship programs, and Sault College is heavily involved in" this program for First Nations.

What does industry say? Here's a quote from Robert Hardt, president and CEO of Siemens Canada: "By bringing faculty, students and partner industries together under one roof, the Mechatronics Simulation and Demonstration Centre will capture the enormous synergies of applied learning, research and demonstrations.... A defining feature of this initiative is showcasing Ontario's most promising examples ... in an exhibition-style space that both informs and inspires innovation...."

What does the director of the Child Development Institute say? "I am delighted to learn about the \$20-million expansion" of the Ontario youth action plan for at-risk youth.

We've heard a lot from the practical nurses' association and the important work that they do in our health care system. The association "supports a number of the health care initiatives put forward by the provincial government, including its continued funding for mental health and addiction services and additional support to improve the quality of palliative care...."

What does the executive director of Drinks Ontario say? "We are pleased to see that there are changes ahead for the sale of beverage alcohol in Ontario, and that the government is interested in more meaningful discussion on how best to go about making that a reality."

For the members sitting opposite, what about Rob Keffer, the mayor of Bradford West Gwillimbury? "I shared previously the good news about provincial funding for refurbishing Back St. and Line 9, as well as the doubling of GO train service. Today's budget had more good news: an additional \$80 million for affordable housing, which I hope we can tap into to deliver on our critical need for seniors' housing. The federal government also announced measures related to affordable housing...." I hope that this, together with the province, gets things rolling.

I have another quote from Unifor for members of the third party. Katha Fortier: "Some of the measures in this budget will help secure a stronger future for Ontarians ... 60% of Ontario workers do not have a workplace pension plan. Given the failure of the Harper Conservatives to reform the CPP, the importance of the ORPP—the Ontario pension plan—"cannot be understated...."

"Today's budget included much-needed funding for transportation."

**0940**

I could go on and on, but let me pick out one that I find particularly informative. Jamie Lim, the president and CEO of the Ontario Forest Industries Association: "We thank Premier Wynne and Minister Mauro for fulfilling their 2014 commitment to ... provide \$60 million in funding for critical resource access road infrastructure in northern and rural Ontario. This is great news because these resource access roads are the foundation of economic development in these regions."

Speaker, I could go on and on with endorsements about the strength and the quality and the high regard with which this budget has been received, but I think I've captured the point.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Barrie.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** I'm pleased to stand in support of this budget. I know that the people in my riding are thrilled with the announcements, particularly the building of infrastructure. The municipalities are looking forward to this infusion of funds. They have been waiting for this for some time. Both urban and rural communities will benefit from this budget.

My riding of Barrie is extremely thrilled that they will have more frequent and consistent service for those constituents who must leave our area to go to their jobs. The additions to the GO train schedule will be a wonderful asset to those many, many people who travel back and forth from Barrie to Toronto or points south for their jobs.

It will also be a wonderful way to bring people to Barrie. Barrie has a lot to offer, and this will make it a great place for young families to come and spend a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday afternoon. I can honestly tell you that my family and people I know are looking forward to being able to take the GO train down to Toronto, not have to worry about parking your car on the weekends, and going to a show or to a baseball game or to a Raptors game, and perhaps having a slight libation before you get back on the train to go back to Barrie. Those are things that are very exciting for our riding.

Rural municipalities are also looking forward to this budget. They are eagerly waiting to apply for funds for badly needed roads and bridges. It's very important to rural communities.

Ontario is making the largest investment in infrastructure in the province's history: more than \$130 billion over 10 years, including dedicated funds for Moving Ontario Forward. Every dollar that we receive from broadening the ownership in Hydro One will be placed in the Trillium Trust, to be dedicated for roads, transit and bridges under the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

As outlined in the 2014 budget that was passed last July—my first budget, and a wonderful experience, I might add—Moving Ontario Forward is investing in public transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure across Ontario.

A wonderful side effect of all this infusion of money into transit and infrastructure is the creation of jobs.

Good jobs mean people will be putting money into the economy. When you put money into the economy, the economy grows and Ontario prospers. When we're investing, we're building, and when we're building, we're growing.

The government is committing to balancing the budget by 2017-18, and we're on track to do that. The budget deficit for this year, 2015-16, is forecasted to be \$8.5 billion, the lowest deficit forecast since the onset of the global recession. A balanced budget will sustain the programs and services Ontarians rely on over the long term.

What I like about this budget, and why I ran for this party, is because there is a balanced approach. We're not cutting a whole bunch of jobs. We are infusing money into the province, into the economy, as well as trying to reduce the budget. We've consistently delivered on our commitment to follow the path to balance and to do so in a way that is fiscally responsible and fair. Where there is opportunity and security for every Ontarian, the province will be the best place to live from childhood to retirement.

I do know that I have lived in Barrie all my life—*Interjection.*

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Pardon me?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What about in retirement, not so good?

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Anyway—*Interjection.*

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** We have now also started the retirement plan—thank you, Mr. Yakabuchi, for—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yakabuski.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Oh. Did I get that wrong?  
We—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down, please. I'm glad you two are having a great conversation between each other, but remember me? You've got to go through me. Thanks so much.

Continue.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will go through you.

Last week, I was visiting Roberta Place, which is a long-term-care facility, and they were thrilled that the government has committed money to raise the wages of their personal support workers. This is very important with the seniors because they like continuity. These workers are like family to them and they're pleased that we're looking after them. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** This budget is a roaring success if we want to increase the deficit. This budget is a roaring success if we want to increase the debt. I'll explain what I mean by all of that.

We have increased costs coming in. We have a payroll tax—they call it the Ontario pension plan—which is going to be 1.9% off the employee's paycheque and 1.9% out of the employer's payroll, for 3.8%. That's a tax.

We're going to have a new carbon tax, which will raise the cost of energy to the average consumer or anybody who is buying energy, which is everybody.



We don't have enough money to look after CCACs and to provide care for our seniors, who need help badly. This budget does not provide that. In fact, we're getting cuts. There are hospitals in my riding that are laying people off because this government does not have the money to give to them because they squandered it away on things like gas plant scandals etc. That list is very lengthy.

Not to mention our hydro bills, which are going through the roof with the green energy plan—and of course they keep building more wind turbines. We're going to have something like 1,900 of them along the north shore of Lake Superior—which is wonderful. Just imagine what the cost of that power line will be to get the power back to where the people are, in Toronto and southern Ontario. But we're going to do it, and there are going to be subsidies, and they'll go to offshore companies. I don't know where Samsung is from, but somebody tells me they're in Korea. That's a good way to get rid of money.

You might ask the question, "Why did we not go to our friends in Quebec, who have all kinds of green energy in James Bay, and the money would have stayed in Ontario and it would have been a third of the cost to Ontarians, without subsidies?" But no, we didn't do that.

That's why we have deficits increasing and debt increasing. This budget continues on the mission to impoverish Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I'm so happy I was here this morning to hear some of my colleagues from across the way, particularly the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Yes, my friend, investment in northern Ontario is important. Maintenance of our roads is also important. Making sure that individuals who take our roads in northern Ontario are not putting their lives in danger—which you have absolutely known for the last five years, which you have chosen to turn a blind eye to and not do anything about. That is not what Ontarians want in northern Ontario.

The Ring of Fire, my friend, absolutely is an important development that we need in Ontario. What we do need is for Ontario—these are resources in our backyard. If we have the billion dollars, it's time to start moving with that billion dollars. If you don't know what to do with it, I suggest that you go talk to Noront, KWG and the First Nations who are there who have an idea to share with you. If it's too complex, sit down with them and have a chat so you can get the understanding about how we need to develop the Ring of Fire. Stop blaming Big Brother. Start spending money to get to those First Nations so that they can build their capacity and benefit from the social programs we can bring to those communities by having the roads and rail and electrifying those communities.

**0950**

With regard to my friend from aboriginal affairs, I absolutely hear you, my friend. What northern and Ontario people are saying—you're absolutely right. They do

want good health care. They do want good education. They do want good infrastructure. They do want good investment. What they don't want is teachers on strike, educational individuals who are struggling to teach their kids. What they don't want is health care sector providers who are not in the hospitals, providing the care we need. What they don't want are scandals with regard to Ornge, eHealth and privatization—and what they don't want is to sell Hydro One.

That's what northern Ontario is telling us. That's what northerners are saying. That's what Ontario is saying. Listen to what they're saying.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough—Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I am delighted to join in on this little discussion. I just want to thank my two colleagues, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, for their speeches and comments on the budget.

To be honest with you, Mr. Speaker, I think it's a great budget for the province of Ontario. You have to continue to invest in the province if you want to stabilize our economy and if you want to grow the economy.

I sit here on this side, and my friend from the official opposition criticizes the government for its debt. I think he failed to realize that the majority of the debt that we incurred was to build that infrastructure that the previous government had not invested in, especially in the energy field. This government is the one that built 19 new natural gas plants because we had an electricity system that was falling apart. To do that, you have to incur debt.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My good friend from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke is commenting, too.

On the other hand, my friend from the NDP is complaining that we're not doing enough. It's kind of difficult to understand this whole Legislature. On this side they're saying don't spend money, and on the other side they're saying spend money. I think we found a natural balance.

This government is doing what the public wants. We're responding to Ontarians. We're building infrastructure. We're investing in the talent of our people. We're investing in skilled trades—and I think we'll make a huge difference to this province in the years to come.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'm going to have a chance to speak myself in a couple of minutes, but I did want to comment on the rosy picture that gets painted on the other side of the House about the condition that Ontario is in. It is just not in step with reality. We'll hear a little bit about reality when I have my opportunity to speak in a few minutes.

That is the kind of fantasy they've tried to thrust upon the people of Ontario: that somehow, they actually have an idea and control of the fiscal policy in the province of Ontario. Speaker, they are absolutely out of control over there. They're dreaming themselves, and they've deluded themselves for the past 12 years.

We've got an almost \$300-billion debt now in this province—\$299 billion. They have no idea whatsoever how they're going to deal with that. You put that into perspective. They love to chide the federal government. They've been making jokes about Joe Oliver's off-the-cuff remark about Stephen Harper's granddaughter, who doesn't exist yet. But they've been chiding Joe Oliver. Then Kathleen Wynne talks about, "Oh, I won't leave these decisions to our grandchildren."

What is she leaving to her grandchildren, my grandchildren and any other grandchildren or children who are yet to be born? What is she leaving? A legacy of disaster and debt. It's \$300 billion today. What will it be by the time these people are thrown out of office in 2018? We can only imagine. We can only imagine where it will be then because—the finance minister talks about a "path to balance." Quite frankly, he is dreaming. Their point is to get it down to \$8.5 billion this year. That's the easiest \$2.5 billion they're going to knock off of that because they're selling our assets to do it. Once those assets are gone, and they have no other revenue sources to draw from, how are they going to get to the rest of it? Good question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The finance minister has two minutes.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Who's going? Go ahead.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm grateful to all of those who have responded: the members from Carleton-Mississippi Mills, Algoma-Manitoulin, Scarborough-Rouge River and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. This is a really important discussion, and I'm grateful for all the comments that were made.

I'm perhaps particularly most sensitive to those made by my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin because I know that the member for Algoma-Manitoulin, as well as our northern colleagues, understands just how important it is that we do have the right vision for northern Ontario in particular, and how it speaks to the vision for the entire province. I think that really is what our budget expresses: a real vision for the future of the province. There's no question that we've made some bold and some very, very tough decisions, but I believe that ultimately we've made the decisions that strike the right balance, and that is the debate that's taking place.

All I can say, and I'm wishing I had much more time, is when one looks at the future for a part of the province which makes up 87% of the land mass, and only 6% of the population, but where the real economic future of the province may indeed be—I am proud to be part of a government that is showing such strong support for that economic growth in the province. Whether it's the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, whether it's the northern highways program or whether it's the increase in the forestry access roads funding, all of them are reflections of things that I don't think any of my colleagues on whatever side of the House would be disagreeing are needed to move our economy forward. I certainly stand here proudly.

In terms of the Ring of Fire, we're working very closely—as I think the member from Algoma-Manitou-

lin in particular knows—with all the companies and, right now, perhaps with Noront Resources the most. I invite you to speak to them about the work that we're doing with them. Yes, it is complex, but we want to make sure we get it right. Nothing has changed in that regard, and I can't imagine that you would feel any differently about it.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of this budget. I'm proud of being part of the Kathleen Wynne government and grateful to have had a chance to speak today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I promised, Mr. Speaker, I'd have a chance to speak to the budget motion shortly as I was commenting on the Liberals' Kool-Aid-driven dissertation a little bit earlier.

Let's just talk about that debt. I will pick up where he left off. The debt in this province, basically with this budget, will be \$300 billion. In order to pay off debt you have to eliminate the deficit first. According to the finance minister's own path to balance, we're not going to do that before 2017-18. I, myself, on this side of the House—and my colleagues share this view—say that there's no way they're going to get there because they don't have the willingness, the intestinal fortitude to do what is necessary to be done.

Even the little bit they're doing—they're already meeting with tremendous resistance from their former friends, those people who, during the last campaign in 2014, went around saying, "Everything is going to be fine; just support us. Don't let that Hudak guy win because he's going to be your enemy. Keep the alliance with the Liberal Party going, and everything's going to be fine." As we see on a daily basis when we look across the province and we see the numerous and mounting and growing number of students who are not in school, that alliance is crumbling.

The CUPE people who are protesting with contract negotiations that are not going anywhere there—that alliance is crumbling. Yet the government says they're holding the line on all those settlements. Let's talk about the tentative settlement with the Power Workers' Union that they claim was a net zero, yet they're giving 2.75% of the base salary of each one of those workers—a 2.75% value of shares in Hydro One, a company that they're claiming that they're selling 60% of.

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If you've got a house and you're going to sell the house, but before the buyer gets there, "We took out the windows. We sold the windows," the value of that house drops. "Oh, did we tell you we took out all the hardwood flooring? You're down to the plywood subfloor throughout the living room." Oops; down goes the value of the house some more.

So the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board president are saying it's a net-zero contract with the Power Workers' Union, but they're giving 2.75% in shares in Hydro One. They're telling the



people, “We’re going to net this amount of money out of the 60% sale of Hydro One,” but in the meantime they’re parsing it off piece by piece so that the asset will be worth far less to any buyer. It’s only common sense. But they try to spin this stuff. I think they do it intentionally. They either deliberately insult the intelligence of the people of Ontario or they’re playing a shady game. If I have to withdraw that, you just tell me, sir, but it sounds to me like they’re playing a shady game and fudging the numbers when they’re doing that kind of stuff.

That’s just one issue, and that’s how it’s hard to get a handle on what is the truth when the Liberals start talking about budget, debt, deficit. It’s hard to get a handle on what is the truth because there’s such a myriad of conflicting pieces of information that come from that side of the House, and I am convinced that it is not by accident. Everything they do over there is by design. It is carefully calculated in the corner office over there on the second floor. Everything is carefully calculated. There is nothing that happens by chance; there is nothing that happens by accident. Everything is clinically determined as to how we might be able to fool the people on this one, confuse the people on that one, hornswoogle them on another couple of things, and the next thing you know, the people are walking around in some kind of a daze, wondering just what the fiscal condition of the province of Ontario is.

You know why they do some of this stuff, Speaker? They try to deflect it—and I know that you’re sitting in the most non-partisan seat in this House at the time being, so I understand the dilemma that it puts you in sometimes. But you know as well as I do that one of the reasons they kind of throw out this conflicting information from time to time is to deflect the people away from the multitude of scandals that they’re hoping they forget or stop talking about.

This government is setting all kinds of records. While it’s record deficits that they set in office—no government has ever had a deficit as high as this government, no government has ever added as much to the debt as this government and no government in the history of Ontario has been the subject of more police investigations. So they are record-breaking. They could probably have a section in the Guinness Book of World Records all by themselves. It could just be called Liberal Legacy of—I have to be careful what I say here—Liberal Legacy of Lies.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You know what to do, don’t you?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, I withdraw that. Shame on me, because I couldn’t think of anything else that fit the alliterative way that I wanted to get that point across.

So here we are with this \$8.5-billion deficit in this budget, yet the government is failing in delivering on its promises of the election. They’re failing Ontarians. They’ve had to resort to a fire sale of one of our biggest assets, in Hydro One.

My predecessor Sean Conway, back when he was the energy critic in 2002, was chiding the then Progressive

Conservative government on their musings about how they might capitalize on the value of Hydro One and privatize it. It never came about. But Sean Conway said—and I’ll paraphrase because I can’t quote him, because I don’t have it in front of me—something to the effect of, “You can’t sell Hydro One. It is the central nervous system of Ontario.” You know how the juice, the electricity, the power runs through all those wires all across this province, whether it’s transmission or distribution or whatever? He called that the central nervous system of Ontario. How could you sell it? He said that it’s wrong. Dalton McGuinty said, “You can’t do it, and you haven’t campaigned on it.”

But what have we got here with the Liberals? They have a vague reference to “maximizing assets” and whatever, that was in that 2014 budget. It is as clear as mud. Then they take that, and all of a sudden, they say, “That was the mandate from the people to sell Hydro One.” Wow.

I’ll tell you, if I was that unclear to my children when they were teenagers, or if my parents were as unclear to me when I was a teenager and getting the car, well, I’ll tell you, some things really would have been wrong. No, they left me with some clear directions, as we left our kids with some clear directions, when they were going out with the car, when they were teenagers.

But according to this Liberal government, they can take any vague reference and call that an absolute mandate to do whatever they sought.

You see, that is part of that design program I’m talking about, where nothing is by accident. Nothing in the corner office happens by chance. They probably hired somebody like Ed Clark and paid \$7 million under the table somewhere to come up with the wording.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You’ll withdraw the one comment.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I withdraw.

What I was doing, Speaker, was referring to the fact that they paid \$7 million to come up with this Ed Clark report. I’ll talk about the Beer Store if I get a chance, too.

But it’s amazing. I think what happens is sometimes, when I’m speaking in this House, the clock accelerates. That could be something that is determined by people in the corner office too. All of a sudden, I’m just getting to the juicy parts, and the clock is running out.

Somewhere in that corner office, they came up with a scheme that said, “Okay, let’s pay somebody—these wordsmith guys—the guy who can come up with these fancy phrases that will really say nothing but we’ll be able to interpret and claim that it gives us the right to do anything.” That’s how the Liberal government works over there.

What do we want to talk about next? It’s just a cornucopia of things that we could talk about. Oh, let’s talk about the winter maintenance program. That is the next real scandal. The next real scandal is the winter maintenance program.

You know, Speaker, I am reluctant to go down this path, but I’m almost forced to, because during the last

election, the Premier got up on more than one occasion and, during the campaign, raised the spectre of Walkerton and put that squarely on the shoulders of Tim Hudak, who was a member of the Harris government at the time.

If we examine the O'Connor report and all of the recommendations that were in it, we're clear that—and this is standard procedure for any kind of report. They're going to make sure that the government—because the government is the largest entity involved—takes a lot of the responsibility in trying to ensure that something like this doesn't repeat itself.

We all are aware of what was in the O'Connor report. But what the Liberals don't want to talk about, that was also clear in there, was the fact of the failure of public servants—two people in particular, the Koebel brothers—who deliberately falsified information when they knew there was *E. coli* in the water system of Walkerton, and denied that information and failed to report it. That was the single biggest component that led to seven deaths in Walkerton.

But Kathleen Wynne, while she was campaigning, blamed—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order: the member from Northumberland—Quinte West.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Speaker, I would just ask that the member get back to Bill 91.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I believe it is a budget motion—

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Budget motion—I apologize—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The speakers having a little altercation there without me being involved: That will end.

Secondly, when I feel that he's gone too far, I'll let him know. Thank you, to the member from Northumberland.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Very good, Speaker.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The fact of the matter is, Speaker—and I thank you for your indulgence—during a budget motion, the tradition in this House is that we can speak about whatever we feel is pertinent that is wrong with the government. I could speak for 27 days non-stop. Just hook me up to a catheter and I'll get going, because there's no limit of stuff that we could talk about in this government.

Anyway, during that campaign, the spectre of that was raised on a repeated basis. That was the failure of the Koebel brothers—the illegal acts. They were convicted of their illegal acts.

1010

But now let's talk about the winter maintenance program of this government. This was not the failure of an individual. This was not an illegal act. This was a deliberate policy decision. In 2009, long after the privatization of highway maintenance contracts, this government made a conscious decision to reduce the amount of winter maintenance on our highways, a conscious decision to lower the number of pieces of equipment in key areas. Why? To save \$30 million or \$35 million.

Let's put this into perspective. This is the same government that wasted \$1.1 billion on the gas plant scandal, \$2 billion on the eHealth scandal—

**Interjection:** Smart meters.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —smart meters that they said would cost \$1 billion and it came in at \$1.9 billion.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** The MaRS bailout.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The MaRS bailout. I can't list them all because I'll be out of time, and that's just the list. The list would use up all the time.

They made a conscious decision to reduce highway maintenance in this province, a \$30-million saving. Seven people in Walkerton—as a result of an illegal act that could have been prevented if people were doing their job. How many people? There are up to 200, I believe, legal actions against the government as a result of accidents on your highways, as a result of your decision to reduce maintenance on our highways.

The prime responsibility of the government is to ensure that our highways are safe. It is not the responsibility of the contractor. The contractor is responsible for the contract that they have signed. It is the government's ultimate responsibility to ensure that our highways are safe.

So a decision was made in 2009 to reduce the winter maintenance on our highways. First of all, for years they denied that it was being reduced. They said that's not the case. But do you know what happened? It might have been my colleague. Was it you that brought the motion?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Yes, it was.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My colleague from Leeds—Grenville brought the motion because he lives along the 401 there, one of the worst stretches, where they reduced from 59 or 55 pieces of equipment to 36. I don't know the exact numbers, but it was a significant drop in the number of pieces of equipment, and there were a number of accidents as a result of that. So he brought that to the Auditor General. The Auditor General did an investigation. The report was clear: The government has failed. The government has failed the people of Ontario. The government made a \$30-million decision to put lives at risk.

Now, as a result, you have 200 court cases on your table. How much is it going to cost to fight those court cases? How much is it going to cost to fight those court cases here in the province of Ontario? How much more will you put the families through? How much more will you put the families through who are on the other side of that court case? How much more will you put those families through? I know you people want to bury this. You want to bury this issue as fast as you can, but this is your issue. You can't blame this on any other government. This government is famous for wanting to go back to George Drew and Leslie Frost, but their favourite target is, of course, Mike Harris.

**Interjection.**

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** This government. I'm not speaking about you specifically, Minister. I'm talking about your government in general. In general, when things are going wrong, they blame somebody else.

But this is entirely—entirely—the Liberals' problem, and they will have to face it, they will have to deal with it



and they will have to accept the consequences. But I don't think this one is going away any time soon.

So let's talk about hydro for a moment, because, believe it or not, I've got less than three minutes. Hydro went up 15% on May 1. On May 13, which is just two weeks from today—

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** No, next week. A week from today, we're going to have protesters here at Queen's Park. They are not coming for any other reason but that they are so frustrated with the hydro policies, the energy policies, of your government which are driving them personally, and businesses in their localities into bankruptcy.

People don't come here because they're not happy with the weather; they're coming here because they're so frustrated that you people decided your Green Energy Act in 2009—George Smitherman's great revelation; again, probably conjured up in the corner office—was going to change the world here in Ontario. It was going to cost people about 1% a year—1% a year. Well, all we've seen is hydro prices more than triple what they were in 2003.

You guys will go on about how you've rebuilt the system, and this and that. You've built all kinds of wind turbines that we don't need. You're taking that power, and you're giving it away. You're actually paying Quebec, which has a surplus of hydraulic capacity, to take that during the nighttime when we're not using it because you can't shut down those turbines; they just keep going.

It's just the worst possible solution to an energy problem you could ever conceive of. You couldn't come up with a worse plan if the decision was, "Find out what is the worst thing we can do for energy in this province and then adapt it." You wouldn't have come up with something as bad as the one you actually came up with.

It is a disaster. It is hurting our economy. It will continue to hurt our economy for decades because of the contracts that you have signed. That's why those people are coming down here next week: because they can't take it any longer. The name of their protest is "Enough Is Enough."

When it comes down to this government and your failures and your lack of compassion for the people and the damage that you've laid upon them, I guess the question for myself, my colleagues and, I think, every reasonable person in the province of Ontario is, "When is enough just too much?"

#### *Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1017 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just before we commence with introductions of visitors, I understand that we've got quite a few. If you keep them short and

brief, without explanations or anything else, I would like to get through all of the introductions. Please be cognizant of that request.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'd like to welcome the eye physicians and surgeons who are here today for their lobby day. In the gallery shortly will be Dr. Tim Hillson, Dr. Kylene McReelis and Amanda Meek. I hope the members will take time to attend their reception this evening and learn more about their work. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Today we have many friends here affected by Lyme disease. I want to introduce Linda and David Kelso, Jeanne Pacey, Dr. Bev Bateman, Debra Fraleigh, Kim Kerr, Jessica Bell, the Ontario Lyme Alliance, CanLyme, the G. Magnotta Foundation for Vector-Borne Diseases, along with the Sun County Lyme disease support group, Hamilton Lyme Disease Support Group, Toronto Lyme disease support group and the York North Lyme Support Group.

I challenge everybody to come outside at the end of question period for the Take a Bite Out of Lyme Disease campaign.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Please join me in welcoming Nicole Cooper and Scott Bryan, who are constituents of mine and the proud parents of page captain Colin Bryan. Welcome.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I wish to introduce Stephanie Anne Carty, a former constituent, and her co-worker on segment from India, Sachin Vadgama.

Also, Susan Wells is here from Haldimand-Norfolk Reach for family services day.

Thirdly, it goes without saying that so many people are here with respect to awareness of Lyme disease. In particular, I wish to introduce constituent Will Yelland and his family up in the top corner.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I hope everyone will join me in welcoming Aaron Shull from the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, as well as Sue Gillespie, the CEO of Carizon Family and Community Services in Kitchener. Like many others, Sue is here today for family service day at the Legislature. Welcome.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** It is family service day. There's a luncheon today in room 228-230. I hope everybody can attend.

We have some guests from Thunder Bay: from the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre, up in the public gallery, Nancy Chamberlain, the executive director; and my dear friend, board member Lori Golab. Welcome to both of you.

From the Catholic Family Development Centre is Carol Cline, executive director, and Ms. Bert Kreps, who is the board chair.

Welcome to them all.

Please come to the luncheon.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's a proud day for the riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex. I'd like to introduce in the gallery Cheryl and Nathaniel Abbate, and Patrick McNorton, here on behalf of the Sun County Lyme awareness group, and also, from Family Service Kent, executive director Brad Davis and board chair Leo Heuvelmans. Welcome.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm delighted to welcome, from Family Service Thames Valley, Louise Pitre, who is executive director, and Shelley Yeo, who is a board member. Thank you for coming.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I would also like to recognize a number of individuals from Family Service Ontario's 2015 board of directors: president Alan McQuarrie from North Bay; vice-president Robert Campbell from Peterborough; secretary Lori Golab from Thunder Bay; and Connie McLeod from Thunder Bay.

Also, we have Elisha Laker, executive director, Family Services York Region.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It gives me great honour to introduce Wayne Tompkins from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Wayne is the grandfather of page Colton Tompkins.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Twice this week I've had people from Sudbury, and this time it's Lynne Lamontagne. She's the executive director of Sudbury Counselling Centre—le Centre de counselling de Sudbury. Bienvenue, Lynne.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** The members in the west public gallery today: I have Casey Ready, executive director of the Community Counselling and Resource Centre for Peterborough, and other folks from Peterborough who are here for family service day.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Mark Creedon, interim executive director of Catholic Family Services Simcoe County, and Michelle Bergin, client services manager for the same organization. Welcome.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I am pleased to welcome the following staff who work for Family Services of Durham, serving the people of Durham in nine locations, especially Oshawa: acting director Dennis Holmes and family counsellors Terri Van Exan, Herb Wiseman, Jody McKenna and Marusia Laschuk.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** As a follow-up to Family Services of Durham, which my good colleague from Oshawa has just introduced, there is also the pleasure to introduce the executive director of Catholic Family Services of Durham, Elizabeth Pierce, and her board vice-chair, Stan MacLellan, to the Legislature today.

Also, Mr. Speaker, if I may, on Lyme disease, there is a victim attempting to get here this morning from my area, Wendy Lee Gonzales, and if she doesn't make it, her husband, Alex, will.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to welcome Eleanor Cox of Bancroft, drawing attention to Lyme disease today.

Also, my good friend in the west members' gallery—I know you'll do a more formal introduction—Phil Gillies is here today. It's good to see Phil.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** On a point of order—*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to introduce five other members of the Family Service Ontario 2015 board of

directors: Shelley McCarthy from Brantford, Lynne Dupuis from Sudbury, Sharon Mayne Devine from Brampton, Lynne Lamontagne from Sudbury, and Brad Davis from Chatham. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to welcome Margo and Michael Timmins, members of the Cowboy Junkies. They will be inducted into the Canadian hall of fame, and are residents of the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I need to introduce Lianne Spencer and her inspiring daughter Page, who are up in the galleries here today for Lyme disease awareness day.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'd like to introduce Ray Houde, director of Counselling and Support Services of SD&G. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I'd like to introduce some interns today. Erich Schmidt, Aashish Oberoi, and Mark Poopalapillai are here today.

A young constituent from my hometown, Natasha Crombie, is here as well.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'd like to introduce Alan McQuarrie, executive director of the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing, and Tammi McKenzie, a volunteer board member at the community counselling centre.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It's a great pleasure to welcome page captain Afiyah Islam, here with her mother, Ahama Munmun; her sister Samia Islam; and her brother Mahazib Ashraf Shownik, from Crescent Town in Beaches-East York.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to welcome Amy Terrill, who's a resident of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock and is also here with Music Canada as a vice-president. Welcome, Amy.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** It gives me unbridled joy to also welcome Michael and Margo Timmins of the Canadian band Cowboy Junkies; Steve Kane, the president of Warner Music Canada, who will also be inducted into the Canadian hall of fame for music; and all the other members here for Music Canada and the CARAS association.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like to welcome Kim Kerr from the riding of Dufferin-Caledon. She's a great volunteer and advocate for Lyme disease, and you've got to see her green car.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm not sure if he's here yet, but somewhere in Queen's Park today we have Scott Maxwell, the executive director of Wounded Warriors Canada, a tireless advocate for veterans. And he's my former executive assistant. He was so helpful when I was first elected. Welcome, Scott.

**Ms. Daiene Vernie:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce a new, hard-working intern here at the Legislature: Claire Matlock, who is also my daughter.

I would also like to mention Sue Gillespie, who works just across the street from my constituency office in Kitchener. Welcome.

1040

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I'd like to welcome Natasha Crombie and Theo Poenaru to the Legislature today.



They are interns and will be interning at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm very excited to welcome a constituent of mine, Erin Benjamin, who is the executive director of Music Canada Live, but most importantly, she is Oliver's mom. Erin, welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Just in case there's anybody else here today who wasn't introduced, welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If you check Hansard, I used to do that too.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's the moustache caucus, come on.

With us in the members' gallery, from the riding of Brantford, from the 32nd and the 33rd Parliaments: Mr. Phil Gillies. Welcome.

### WEARING OF RIBBONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I told the member to hold it, so now I will ask him to make his point of order.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear ribbons in recognition of Lyme Disease Awareness Month.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Algoma-Manitoulin is seeking unanimous consent to wear the ribbons. I believe that all members have access to those ribbons. Do we agree? Agreed.

As a reminder, we tend not to wear them until we get the unanimous consent, because it's seen as a prop until such time. So, as a reminder, please.

We have a point of order from the member from Leeds-Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Point of privilege: It's come to my attention—and this is my earliest opportunity to bring it to your attention and to the attention of the House—that on April 14, 2015, more than a week prior to the Liberal budget being presented in this House, the government signed tentative contracts with the Ontario Power Generation workers, allowing them access to shares from the sale of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You need to have written notice of that, because that's not a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** No; but what I'm asking is—you made a decision yesterday that we submit to you, by 3 p.m. yesterday, information. I'm asking you to amend your decision so I can provide you this information about this tentative contract.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to rule on the point of order, and the reality is, I'm not going to accept that.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would hope no one is challenging the Chair.

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, it's been one week since the auditor pulled back the curtain on your negligent inaction with substandard winter road maintenance contracts, putting lives at risk to save a few bucks. For one week, you and your rookie minister have refused apologies, claiming that this time, you're really going to fix it—just wait a year.

Premier, we've heard your claims before, and they've been empty words. Arrogant claims of North American road safety completely ignore the grief of families who've lost loved ones—those close to Barrie residents Alyssa McKeown, 17; her cousin Jessica Chamberland, 18; and Sudbury residents Torry McIntyre-Courville, 18; and Cole Howard, 19, all killed along Highway 69 in January 2012, despite taking all precautions.

Premier, please, no more empty words. Take responsibility, apologize and provide immediate action to prevent tragic winter deaths mounting under your watch.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, before I answer the question, I want to acknowledge the election of two new Premiers this week. I want to congratulate Wade MacLauchlan of PEI on his election on Monday. I also want to take a moment to congratulate Rachel Notley for her election victory in Alberta last night. And I want to acknowledge Jim Prentice and thank him for his service. I enjoyed working with him for the time that he was Premier.

I look forward to working with both Premiers. As you know, Mr. Speaker, I believe that when Premiers work together, we can benefit the whole country. Congratulations to both new Premiers.

To the member opposite, I know that the Minister of Transportation is going to want to comment. We thank the Auditor General for her report. We thank her for the recommendations. As the member opposite knows, we had already begun an internal review. There had already been changes made. There had been more equipment bought. There had been more staff hired. I know that the Minister of Transportation will want to fill in the details in the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As always, I'm starting early.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, the Auditor General is clear: Your government knowingly put the lives of motorists at increased risk. Over the 2011 Christmas break, crashes on northern highways left nine children dead. The Auditor General told us that you blatantly ignored warnings of staff and engineers.

For five years, you knew the contracts were faulty. You didn't act, and people died. Eight-year-old Kaitlyn McPherson, Andrew Beland, Cole Howard, Torry McIntyre-Courville, Jessica Chamberland, Alyssa

McKeown, Hillary Afelski, Zabrina Rekowski, Keegan Melville—all of these kids were killed over a one-week period.

Premier, can you muster even an ounce of integrity and apologize to their families?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank both members from the opposition caucus for their questions today. As the Premier has already said this morning and as I said last week and yesterday as well, we do thank the auditor for her report. There were eight recommendations contained in that report. The Ministry of Transportation accepts all of those recommendations.

I also accept the responsibility of making sure that, as we go forward, we continue to provide the resources and continue to make sure that our area maintenance contractors have a very clear understanding of their contractual obligations. We will keep building on the progress that was contained in and that flowed from the internal review that the ministry launched in 2013, which was before the public accounts committee asked the auditor to go and conduct a review.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** To the Premier. Premier, Melanie Watson was a 34-year-old mother of two young children and a loving wife. She tragically lost her life in January 2014 when her car lost control as a result of uncleared snowdrifts on Highway 7 outside of Carleton Place.

Your Minister of Transportation has stated in this Legislature that, despite cutbacks to road maintenance, you hired more inspectors—instead of more plows, salt, and sand. Premier, this section of Highway 7 had countless complaints against it to the MTO about drifting snow and uncleared banks. Yet not one of your inspectors did anything about that. Your government saved a few bucks and put the lives of Ontario drivers at risk with tragic consequences.

Premier, will you take responsibility and apologize to the family of Melanie Watson?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I'll thank this member as well for his question and his interest in this very important file. I know that it might be difficult for the opposition to listen to the complete answer that we provide, but in addition to the 20 inspectors that were brought forward and were brought on by the ministry as a result of our internal review in 2013—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** In addition to those 20 inspectors, as I've said repeatedly, following our internal review, we have added 105 new pieces of equipment, 55 pieces of equipment, largely for truck climbing and passing lanes in northern Ontario; and 50 pieces of equipment to help deal with ramps and shoulders in southern Ontario, including—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Five years. You've turned a blind eye for five years.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville—I don't think he heard me because he was talking to somebody. The member from Leeds–Grenville, second time.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I just want to stress so it is clearly understood that those 105 additional pieces of equipment were brought on and were put into use as a result of the Ministry of Transportation's internal review following the winter of 2013-14, not as a result—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

1050

## TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, you've said that you were perplexed, mystified and had no idea why these boards were striking. Then you blamed the strikes on local issues time and time again. That's a story that no one is buying anymore. Now, you say kids aren't in the classroom because teachers have a "general desire to strike." The other side of the table is dumbfounded by your remarks.

Minister, it's your job to know why these boards are striking and it's your job to get these students the education that they deserve. Because of your inaction, will you resign before you cost these students the rest of their school year?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The answer to that is no.

I'm almost uncertain as to where to go with that question because there are so many muddled facts in it. I think what I'll just do is review what's going on. We have three boards where the secondary teachers are in a local strike position. I will continue to say that there really has been no clear articulation as to why those local unions have gone on a local strike.

What we know is that all three of the boards remain ready and willing to negotiate with their local unions. We know that the Peel board in particular was there until after midnight on Sunday trying to reach a local agreement. I actually want to commend the board—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —for the effort that they made.

What I can tell—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. A reminder to this minister and everyone: When I stand, you sit, and when I say, "Thank you," that's your signal that your time is up, so stop.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Again to the Minister of Education: When you introduced Bill 122, you promised "a clear and consistent labour framework that works for all parties." Your two-tiered train wreck of a system isn't working for anyone and you aren't working for these students. Nearly 72,000 students aren't in the classroom



today. Over 800,000 more will be impacted by Monday, and it seems like you just simply shrug this off.

Minister, what are you saying to the students and their parents who are worried about the end of the school year?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** What I will say to the students is that we know that the only way to resolve this is to get to the table and negotiate. We remain absolutely committed to negotiating a collective agreement because that's the way we can make sure that every student, regardless of whether they're an elementary or secondary student, is back in the classroom.

We remain committed to negotiating with the secondary teachers and with the elementary teachers, and I want that to be absolutely clear: That's the way to labour peace. It's the way that the Tories, when they were in control, never, ever figured out—how to negotiate. It's also absolutely contrary—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton will come to order.

One wrap-up sentence.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I just want to repeat: We are willing to negotiate. That's how we solve the problem.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Next thing you know, she'll be naming Leslie Frost for the turmoil they're in today.

Minister, this is a quote from you: "This is going to make it a whole lot easier for everybody because we know the rules." That was after the vote on Bill 122.

Here's a quote from your Premier: "It is my responsibility to light whatever fires I need to light under our folks to get that deal and get it in a way that fits within our parameters."

Minister, clearly the two-tiered train wreck of a bargaining system is not working. I think the Premier should be lighting the fire under you, and if you're afraid of the heat, you should resign immediately.

You being mystified is not helping our parents and teachers. Are you intending on ignoring these strikes and the negative impacts right through to the end of the school year, Minister?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I actually have a question for the member opposite. I'd like to know who it is he thinks shouldn't be at the central table. Is it the government that shouldn't be there? Because we supply the money. Is it the school board that shouldn't be there? They're the employers. Is it the teacher unions that shouldn't be there? That was the way you wanted it. You just wanted to take over and not have the teacher unions there. Just who is it that you wouldn't have at the central table? Tell me that.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Start the clock. I will also remind all members of third-person discussion through the Chair. By going through the Speaker, we resist the temptation to elevate the temperature. I remind you all. New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'd like to begin by congratulating Premier-elect Rachel Notley on her victory in Alberta for the NDP yesterday, as the Premier did, as well as the Premier of PEI, Wade MacLauchlan.

My question is for the Premier. Selling off Hydro will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout northern Ontario. My question is—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. All members have a right to put a question that I can hear and an answer that I can hear. Please.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Selling off Hydro will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout northern Ontario. My question is: How many committee hearings will the Premier hold in northern Ontario on her privatization budget and her Hydro One sell-off?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party knows that there are six days of hearings, which is exponentially more than previous parties have had on budget hearings. She also knows that the changes that we are making as a result of the recommendations that Ed Clark and his panel brought forward are being made because we know that we need to invest in infrastructure.

The leader of the third party apparently doesn't believe that investing in the roads and the bridges that are needed in the north should be a priority. She doesn't believe that expanding Highway 11/17 is important. She doesn't believe that building bridges in northern Ontario is important. We know that it is. We know that if the economy is going to thrive, we must make those investments. That's why we're making the changes in assets that we are. We think that it would be a good thing if she supported us in those investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Never will the New Democrats support the sell-off of our public assets that are owned by the people of this province. Selling off Hydro One will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout southwestern Ontario.

My question to the Premier is: Will she have committee hearings in southwestern Ontario on her privatization budget and the sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let's just look at where the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs hearings were held in advance of the budget: Windsor, London, Toronto, Mississauga, Cambridge, Ottawa, Fort Frances, Sudbury, Cornwall, Fort Erie. So in fact there has been a conversation with people across this province in the leadup to the budget. There will be six days of hearings; hearings that anyone from around the province

can delegate to or can feed into. So in fact there has been a very clear and robust conversation with the people of Ontario, and we will continue to have that conversation, going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Unfortunately, in the Premier's litany list of places that they visited, not once did anybody hear that they were planning to sell off Hydro One, in those pre-budget hearings. Selling off Hydro One will have major impacts on the businesses and people throughout eastern Ontario.

My question to the Premier is: How many committee hearings will the Premier hold in eastern Ontario on her privatization budget and the sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What the leader of the third party never talks about is the impact if we do not make the investments that we are proposing, if we do not invest in the roads and the bridges and the transit that are so desperately needed.

The leader of the third party also doesn't talk about the fact that we ran on this.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

1100

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The text of our budget says this: "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario."

We ran on that. It was in our budget. It was in our platform. We've been very clear that we needed to use the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
New question.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier.

The Premier knows very well that she did not run on selling Hydro One. She just admitted it yet again, Speaker.

Yesterday, she said, "We ran on reviewing our assets." My question is, does the Premier think that reviewing assets and selling Hydro One are exactly the same thing?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I think are the same thing is what we said, which was we were going to look at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario, and we were going to work to maximize those assets to make sure that we could have the money to invest in new assets. That's exactly what Ed Clark and his panel have done. That's what we ran on, so we're doing exactly what we said we were going to do.

But the leader of the third party has no plan to make the investments that we have said we're committed to. She has no plan for investing in transit. She puts forward

no options for investing in the roads and the bridges that are needed in this province.

We have the responsibility, as government, to grow this economy. Part of that must be the investment in infrastructure.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.

Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The cost of hydro has major impacts on the family budget. It has major impacts on job creation. The sell-off will impact both of those things. It will impact economic growth. It will impact productivity. It is a huge, big deal.

The Premier was not upfront with the people in May 2014, and she doesn't want to hear from the people in May 2015. Why is the Premier trying to shut out the people who will be paying the price for her wrong decision for generations to come?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party knows full well that the regulatory protections that are in place today will be in place once we move in terms of the broadening of the ownership for Hydro One. She knows that full well.

She knows that the Ontario Energy Board sets prices today. She knows they will set prices—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek—second time.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** She knows that those regulatory protections are in place. She also knows that retaining 40% ownership by the government is the protection that must stay in place for the people of the province.

I think she also knows that investment in infrastructure is critical, but she has no plan to do that, and she has no alternatives to bring forward. We have the responsibility to make those investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'd think that the Premier of the province would have a responsibility to be upfront with Ontarians about her plan to sell off Hydro One, but she will still not use that word. She will not use the word "sell." She didn't run on selling Hydro One, and everybody knows it.

I have some suggestions for the Premier. If the Premier doesn't want to consult with Ontarians, perhaps she could broaden public input, or perhaps she could unlock Ontarians' ideas, or maybe maximize public participation, or review what Ontarians have to say. Speaker, you don't have to call them "public hearings." She doesn't have to call them "public hearings."

Will the Premier actually listen to Ontarians, in whatever way she wants to call it, but just stop the sell-off of Hydro One before it is too late?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.

Premier.



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** First of all, the 2014 budget said specifically that we would study repurposing assets, including our energy agencies. It was clear, and it was strategic.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Essex.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** About selling off, selling off, selling off: The legislation states, "The minister on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario shall not sell, dispose of or otherwise divest any common shares of Hydro One Inc. if the sale, disposal or divestment would result in the minister on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario owning a number of common shares that is less than 40 %...."

We also have provisions in governance that require two thirds' permission to make significant decisions moving forward. So we still have control, and most importantly, we are investing in assets, which they will not.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question as well is to the Premier. The government and the third party can wax philosophical about whether or not we're going to sell public assets—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's why I'm standing.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex, second time.

Carry on.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The government reached a deal with the Power Workers' Union on April 14. That was two days before the release of the Clark report and nine days before the provincial budget, which by the way, did not include any increase in infrastructure funding. Secondly, you only decided that you were going to pay down the debt after the leader of the official opposition pointed out that it was the law.

That means these shares were bargained away before the public knew anything about the sale of Hydro One. Isn't it true that the government is not concerned with funding infrastructure from this deal, nor is it prepared to pay down the debt? It's actually to sell off shares to fund pension plans. The question is, who's next?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We made it clear in the budget of 2014, in the economic statement of 2014 as well. We made it clear in our platform when we ran for re-election, and we made it clear in this budget as to what we are doing. Yes, we are dealing with all stakeholders that are involved. We are consulting with many Ontarians. We have done so for the past almost two years in regard to what we are going to do to invest in infrastructure, invest in transit, invest in the things that are going to make us competitive long term and reinvest those holdings that

we have to make even more money for the people of Ontario, including those who work in the very industries that we're talking about. We want everybody to be at their best.

Negotiations are under way. Ratification has not occurred. But I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker: It is a net-zero deal. All of us are going to benefit from what we are doing going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to go back to the Premier on this, Speaker, because I think it's important that the Premier take responsibility for what her government is doing and how it's communicating to the public in this province.

They never intended to sell Hydro One to fund infrastructure or to pay down the debt. In fact, we now know, with the secret deal that occurred on April 14, that the real profits that were going toward the Hydro One sale were intended to go to pay off a pension plan to buy labour peace. The question then becomes: Who's next? Nurses? Is it teachers? Who's going to benefit from the sale of Hydro One? Certainly not the taxpayers.

That's why I think it's important that, as the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has pointed out, the parliamentary budget officer and the Auditor General must review this deal to find out what exactly is in the fine print, because we simply do not trust what this Liberal government is doing. Will you commit to that review? Yes—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The same Financial Accountability Officer the members opposite voted against? They voted against the very issues that they ran on themselves.

We have put forward a Trillium Trust that makes it very specific: Dollar for dollar that's generated from the maximization of our assets will be reinvested in infrastructure. It was very clear in a separate lock-up for the benefit of understanding what we are proposing to do, and that is, a component of it does go towards debt. So we are being very clear.

The member is talking about things that have yet to come to fruition because negotiations are still under way, and when they are done, it will be very transparent and very open, and we have been up until this point. We'll continue to do so not only for the benefit of the workers and not only for the benefit of those in the broader public who ultimately will own a broader ownership of Hydro One, but the people of Ontario as well, because all of it will be reinvested for the benefit of them and their future.

1110

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Minister of Education said that class caps

are negotiated locally and not talked about at the central table, but for weeks she has not been sure why local boards in Durham, Rainbow and Peel are on strike.

Premier, maybe your government is so mystified because at one time the Liberals believed, to quote Mr. McGuinty, that “smaller class sizes allow students to get more of the attention they need to learn to read, write and do math at a high level.” The teachers have been very clear that this dispute is all about keeping class sizes manageable for the benefit of students. Liberal flip-flopping on this issue is quite perplexing.

Will the Premier finally admit that more than a decade of this government’s chronic underfunding of education and flip-flopping on class caps are forcing students and families to pay the price?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I would just simply like to repeat what I said before, which is that we are absolutely committed to negotiations. I think it’s unfortunate that I’m now hearing about issues that might be at the central table one place, the local table another place, and the elementary and secondary negotiations actually are getting quite confused in the comments that I’m hearing from the opposition.

When we’re talking about early literacy and early numeracy, we’re talking about making sure that we pay a lot of attention to that at the primary and junior years. We’ve introduced the full-day kindergarten program to make sure that we have our children well prepared. I can assure the member that none of the work that we have done with FDK is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I think Bill 115 shows this government’s commitment to negotiating fairly.

Again to the Premier: The Premier and the Minister of Education seem to call local issues “central” and central issues “local” when it’s convenient, but at the end of the day it’s her government that sets the priorities for education.

The Premier’s priorities for education are clear: cutting \$250 million from education this year, cutting \$6 million from special education and closing 88 good neighbourhood schools.

In response to labour action forced by these overwhelming cuts, the Premier and her government have taken to the blame game, saying teachers wanted to go on strike. Will this government stop blaming everyone but themselves and finally take responsibility for creating chaos in our schools?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I just want to be absolutely clear. Education funding last year: \$22.5 billion. Education funding this year: \$22.5 billion. Special education funding has not been cut. So the accusations are just simply inaccurate.

What is interesting is that while we committed \$22.5 billion last year and continue to do that, the NDP platform was actually to take our numbers and cut \$600 mil-

lion extra. That was the very flimsy platform they were running on. It’s actually the NDP that promised to cut education funding, not the Liberals. Ours is the same.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member asked the question.

New question.

## MUSIC INDUSTRY

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. This week is Canadian Music Week, a great time to celebrate our Canadian and Ontario musicians—such as the members of the Cowboy Junkies who are here today—to celebrate their contributions to the vibrant and diverse cultural landscapes in the province of Ontario.

This year, homegrown talent such as Kiesza, Lights, past Juno award winner Dan Hill, who is a constituent, or upcoming stars like a band in the Beach called The Beaches may well be among the many performers who take the stage this week.

Canadian Music Week is a great example of how music performs as a key economic driver in Ontario as well as an important part of Ontario’s cultural landscape. In addition to great music, Canadian Music Week has an estimated economic impact of approximately \$15 million. It supports some 230 full-time and countless part-time jobs and is bringing tourism to Ontario.

Canadian Music Week estimates that over 40% of attendees come from the GTA—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the member from Beaches–East York for this very important—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The two-way dialogue that’s going on right in front of the chair is not helpful.

Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Once again, I would like to thank the member from Beaches–East York for a very important question.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** And you should be clapping, because Ontario is home to Canada’s largest and one of the world’s most diversified music sectors. Ontario’s music industry represents over 80% of Canada’s total music industry revenue and generates over \$429 million in revenue for the province every year.

Our government is committed to strengthening this critical industry. We took a strategic step forward to develop the live music industry in Ontario by launching the Live Music Strategy in 2012 and the Ontario Music Fund in 2013—which over \$19 million in funding has now been provided to support the live music industry through the music fund and Celebrate Ontario.

Now, more than 90 unique music festivals across the province have occurred. The Ontario Festival of Small



Halls in the east to the Kingsville Folk Music Festival in the southwest to the Budweiser music festival in the north are creating and generating tremendous support and highlighting the talent in our province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker. With all the brouhaha on the other side, I didn't hear you ask to put the question, and I appreciate that the minister was able to get the gist of it. I thank the minister for his answer.

This year, in my riding of Beaches—East York, six organizations were supported by the Ontario Music Fund, including Sing!, Canada's premier festival featuring a cappella music. Sing! will draw performing artists, participants, students and general audiences from across Ontario, Quebec and the United States to my riding to take part in this extremely unique event.

This summer, I look forward to attending so many of the festivals taking place in and around the GTA and supporting our music talent in Ontario, which is made possible by the support of the Ontario Music Fund, including the Beaches Jazz Festival.

Will the minister please share with the members of this House how our government has recently strengthened the Ontario Music Fund in the 2015 budget?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The Ontario Music Fund, originally announced in the 2013 budget—which was, by the way, opposed by the members opposite—is creating a business environment where Ontario's artists can thrive while helping the industry become even more competitive, nationally and internationally. As a result of the fund, Ontario's sales, exports and live music offerings are increasing.

To continue this growth through the 2015 budget—if approved—our government can announce that our plan will provide the Ontario Music Fund a permanent annual \$15-million investment. Together with our partners, our goal is to drive economic growth, create jobs and ensure Ontario's talent thrives here at home.

Here's a quote from CIMA president Stuart Johnston: "The Ontario government's commitment to make the Ontario Music Fund permanent ... will give our industry the confidence to invest in Canadian artists for years to come."

We are truly proud of Ontario's outstanding talent. Thank you all for your great work.

## LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** A question to the Premier: Spring is here, and with the advent of spring, Lyme is again upon us. As you know, in the gallery are victims like Will Yelland, a young man from my riding who's in the prime of his life and is having it stripped away by this horrific disease. He travels to the United States for treatment, paying tens of thousands of dollars out of his own pocket. Others have been bankrupted or have lost farms.

The treatment of Lyme disease is fraught with conflicting and unresolved medical, scientific and political dimensions. Premier, what will you tell people, like Will

Yelland up in the gallery, and so many others that are here today and across the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I appreciate the question. The member opposite knows I was born and grew up in his riding as well, and I fully understand the risks of Lyme disease in the Long Point area and the prevalence across this province. It's a very serious problem. As a public health expert, as well as from a medical perspective, I'm more than familiar with the dangers associated with Lyme disease.

I believe, and this government believes, that we need a strong, evidence-based strategy for Lyme disease. It's very important to me. That's why, not that long ago, I and the government developed a provincial Lyme disease action plan. This action plan will ensure—very importantly—strengthened engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and advocates. It will promote close alignment with Lyme initiatives at the federal, provincial and local levels. This action plan—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

1120

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'll talk about it more in the supplementary, but it is very action-oriented. That will be clear in several moments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Again, Premier, there are allegations of shortcomings in the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease, directed both at mainstream medicine and at your government. Social media as well has been accused of communicating inaccurate medical information and pitches for dubious treatment, some in the United States.

We have government for a reason: for province-wide surveillance and education. We need guidelines for prevention, identification and management of this disease. All members of this Legislature have agreed, voting for a private member's bill and voting for a motion.

Again, Premier, you have a majority; you have the power. What can your administration tell these people today?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** What I can say today is that we are acting on the recommendations that we've been provided in terms of this action plan. I asked, a number of months ago, Public Health Ontario to establish a Lyme disease stakeholder group to review the existing educational outreach opportunities in the province.

This action plan is very specific. It includes a review and update of existing public awareness materials and guidance documents, including a review of testing, diagnosis and treatment protocols based on the latest evidence in science, prevention, and tick surveillance protocols—basically the entire spectrum of what we need to do to develop a renewed strategy in this province, a

comprehensive one which will effectively deal with this serious problem.

I should add as well that the member opposite responsible for the environment and climate change reminded me that, with climate change, this is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## ONTARIO FILM INDUSTRY

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Premier. The film and TV industry in our province is growing and is a world leader. It now generates \$1.8 billion a year, creating 31,000 full-time jobs—31,000 jobs, Speaker. But in the budget, the government cut the tax credit that the industry banks on. Reliable and stable tax credits are what the global film industry looks for in a jurisdiction, but that's not even half of it, Speaker. The cuts will be immediate. If you're shooting on a production now, thinking you're getting the deal this government had promised, well, too bad: You're not getting that money. What's worse is, the producers weren't consulted. There was no warning.

Speaker, why didn't the government consult this major industry?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We're very proud on this side of the House to support the film industry in Ontario, and we recognize how important it is to our economy as well. That is why Ontario will continue to be the most generous in all of Canada to support the industry. We do work closely with them, recognizing how effective it is not only in providing more jobs and in creating more economic activity; it also enables the province to showcase itself around the world to the extent that we are a good and dynamic place to do business.

But it's passing strange for the NDP to ask a question about providing support for business when all the time they're asking us to cut supports, to cut loopholes, not to provide for that. All of a sudden, they are onside.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario will continue to provide tax credits to the film industry, and we will continue to work with them all the way through.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener—Waterloo, second time.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I guess they don't think we're against business in Alberta.

Minister, Hollywood has noticed this. Big-time production companies employing thousands are now actively talking and contacting Toronto about taking their billion-dollar businesses elsewhere. They're calling this government's cut a bait and switch because they weren't consulted.

When the film industry leaves, they call it "burning a jurisdiction." Evidence suggests that it takes 10 years for a jurisdiction to bounce back. Speaker, it sounds like this was a one-size-fits-all Treasury Board decision, done without consideration or consultation.

So my question is, will the Premier at least grandfather the changes to the film industry's tax cuts so that productions already here are not threatened and will continue?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to growing our cultural industries and the film industry. A key to that success, by the way, is sustainable tax credits focused on keeping Ontario the best place to invest and do business. We'll be the most competitive.

Through the 2015 budget, we're continuing to support our creative industries through the Ontario Music Fund, which now receives a permanent annual \$15-million investment; the more than \$439 million in the 2015-16 budget for our cultural media tax credits; as well as \$6 million in 2015-16, and \$10 million a year, starting in 2016-17, in a renewed interactive digital media fund. Amending the Ontario film and television tax credits will save our domestic producers \$7 million annually as well.

We will foster economic growth, we will continue to be the lead support of film industry in Canada and we'll work closely with our industry partners throughout.

## TRADE DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. This government has made it a priority to increase trade and investment to grow the economy. My riding of Halton has a diverse and thriving economy that would benefit significantly from opening markets around the world for small and medium-sized companies.

Mexico is one of our NAFTA partners and is Ontario's fifth-largest source of exports and third-largest importer. Many businesses and academics see Mexico not only as an existing trade partner, but also as a growing market for Ontario's expertise in energy, life sciences and infrastructure, to name a few.

Minister, how is this government working to strengthen Ontario's relationship with Mexico in order to increase investment and economic opportunity throughout the province?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the member from Halton for asking a question about trade.

Just last week, I was in Mexico on a trade mission. I have some good news to bring forward. In 2008, Ontario opened an international marketing centre in Mexico City. This centre has just been recognized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Mexico with an outstanding business award for its efforts to improve trade and investment between Ontario and Mexico. I want to congratulate our SEO, Chantal Ramsay, for her outstanding work in Mexico City.

While in Mexico City and Guadalajara, the city that hosted the last Pan Am Games, I was able to promote Ontario as the number one destination for foreign direct investment in North America—a proud legacy of this government and our Premier.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** Thank you for the update, Minister. I'm pleased to hear that your trade mission to Mexico was so successful.



According to the Conference Board of Canada, every \$100-million increase in exports creates approximately 1,000 new jobs for Ontarians. This is great news for businesses in my riding that depend on exporting goods for their economic prosperity.

With the success in Mexico, I'm sure we can expect many new opportunities for the people of our province. Speaker, would the minister be able to tell us how he envisions Ontario's economic future with respect to trade and investment?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you again for the question. We need to take concrete steps to ensure increased economic growth in Ontario. Our Premier knows that the key to improving Ontario's economic future lies in trade and investment.

Using Ontario's diversity to leverage international markets presents us with a unique opportunity to increase our prosperity. This is why I, along with many of my cabinet colleagues, have led missions focused in the areas of agriculture, energy, research and technology, just to name a few, to Ontario's priority trade markets.

We will continue to open and diversify Ontario's trade portfolio and leverage opportunities, such as the Pan-American International Economic Forum, for further possibilities.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, earlier this week, it was announced that the wait-list for affordable housing in Ontario has reached a record high. It's now over 168,000 families.

1130

We've been ringing the alarm bells since last year about the money intended for social housing being wasted by the Housing Services Corp. You said you shared some of our concerns. According to the documents from your ministry, the draft report from the third-party review of the HSC was due on April 10 and the final report no later than April 24. Minister, will you be transparent and release the report to the Legislature today?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Well, when we get the report, we'd be pleased to do that.

Let me just say, on the generic part of the question, the lack of affordable housing and social housing is a problem, and it's a serious concern. It's one we take seriously and it's one that's best solved by working in partnership with other levels of government.

Now, I know that the official opposition's idea of partnership was to download all the housing onto our municipal partners, and to a very great extent, they're doing a wonderful job.

We're going to continue to work with our municipal partners to move the social housing file forward with our expert panel on homelessness and some other initiatives. It would sure be nice to have another government player at the table, and I think you know who I'm talking about.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Minister, enough is enough. You've been using the review as an excuse to stall for months. But while you have been waiting for that report, the waiting list for social housing just keeps on growing.

Will you commit to make the report public when you finally receive it but start today to help those 168,000 families who are waiting for housing by allowing social housing providers to opt out of paying the inflated prices at the Housing Services Corp.? Quit stalling and quit giving the money away and build housing.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** We're working every single day to move these issues forward. That's why, recognizing the serious challenge, we set up the expert panel on homelessness. They're doing some great work and they'll be reporting very soon.

That's also why we convinced the federal government to renew the investment in the affordable housing strategy, which will see \$810 million invested.

It's also why we've engaged right now—we kicked it off—the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. We want to make sure we get it right. That's what stakeholders in the field are telling us we need to do.

Of course, we've increased the CHPI funding, which is enabling our municipal partners to more faithfully and helpfully respond to the very real needs facing Ontarians across our province.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month and a time to remember the thousands of Canadians who are affected by or suffering with Lyme disease. The 2015 tick season has begun, and doctors and veterinarians have already begun removing ticks from people and animals across the province.

We are going on six months since my motion calling for a provincial strategy for Lyme disease passed unanimously in the House. Can the minister please provide me and all our guests with an update on your progress with this Lyme prevention strategy?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I should start by saying that we've launched an action plan which covers virtually every aspect of this important disease. I know the third party, despite what the opposition—their denials. I know the third party agrees that with climate change and increasing temperatures, it actually is becoming worse.

**Interjection:** It's more serious.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** It's more serious. It's more pressing. That doesn't take away from the urgency to deal with this appropriately.

Public Health Ontario is reviewing and updating our 2012 technical report on Lyme disease prevention and control. I mentioned that our action plan already under

way includes a review of the testing, the diagnosis and the treatment protocols based on the best evidence available.

In the United States, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the American College of Rheumatology and the academy of neurology are currently working on new guidelines that will inform our work as well. But most importantly—and I appreciate the fact that the stakeholders, the advocates are here today—I will continue to be with them and benefit from their advice and their expertise to guide us on developing this new strategy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Again to the minister: A critical component in the development of Ontario's Lyme strategy is consultation with the stakeholders named in the motion, all of whom have joined us here today. If the stakeholders that will speak for patients are not consulted, we will get absolutely no changes made to Lyme education, testing and treatment, and patients will continue to suffer.

The clock is ticking, Minister. When will these stakeholders be called together and consulted in order to develop Ontario's Lyme disease strategy? You've had almost six months. Look around, Minister: Do you see all the people? Your so-called action plan has taken no action. These people have travelled great distances to have their voices heard. Minister, how much longer do these people have to suffer until we finally take action on Lyme disease?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The member opposite knows very well that this—and he's not portraying it as this at all. This is a non-partisan issue. I want to speak to the individuals, the stakeholders and the advocates, those that suffer from Lyme disease who are here with us today. I appreciate the seriousness of this disease and I commit to working with you, now and going forward. It was specific to my request that I asked Public Health Ontario to develop a stand-alone Lyme disease stakeholder group to work with us on an ongoing basis as we develop this strategy. I intend to make sure that we constantly, and on an ongoing basis, are benefiting from your advice.

This is an extremely difficult issue, and I appreciate more than anything else the pain and suffering that many of these individuals have to endure. I know, as well, that they feel that the government and the primary care providers haven't necessarily been there to the degree that they should have been at that difficult moment in time. I commit to working with them to develop a strategy that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
New question.

#### FAMILY SERVICE ONTARIO

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Today,

we're very pleased to have Family Service Ontario with us here in the Legislature. Family Service Ontario and its member agencies play an integral role in this government's efforts to address violence against women and our transformation of Ontario's developmental services system.

Family Service Ontario represents approximately 45 not-for-profit member agencies across Ontario that provide community-based mental health services and programs to over 250,000 individuals and families annually, from every age group and socio-economic status.

One of these agencies is located in my riding of Cambridge. The Family Counselling Centre of Cambridge and North Dumfries offers counselling and outreach services for women and families in a safe, caring and respectful environment.

Minister, can you please elaborate on the important work that Family Service Ontario does to support Ontarians and how your ministry supports them in this?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Thank you to the member from Cambridge for the question. As the member has said, the work of Family Service Ontario, or FSO, and their agencies touches thousands of Ontarians and helps to make the lives of the people they serve better.

Through funding provided by my ministry, FSO agencies provide intensive counselling and therapy for survivors of sexual abuse and family violence. They have designed effective and timely early intervention and prevention counselling services for male perpetrators, to keep women and children safe from domestic violence. They also offer programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities and caregiver respite services and supports.

The services provided by FSO and their member agencies are vital. I value the work done by FSO and will continue to work closely with them in order to support Ontarians in need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you, Minister. Clearly, this government and your ministry value the work that Family Service Ontario does to support some of our most vulnerable individuals.

With the recent investments in the developmental services sector and specifically towards the Passport Program, I'm hearing about the progress for individuals and families in my community, some of whom I provided care for in the past as a care coordinator for a CCAC. In fact, since last fall, 6,000 people have been approved for new Passport funding, almost half the budget target of 13,000, which was expected to take four years. The Passport program offers direct funding for individuals and their families to use for services that Family Service Ontario agencies offer.

1140

The work that FSO does to support families in a variety of ways is crucial. Today, FSO is here in the Legislature for an exciting announcement. Minister, can you share the details of this news with the House, please?



**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** As part of the government's ongoing efforts to reduce violence against women, and most recently, with the Premier's launch of It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment, it's clear we are committed to working with this sector.

Building on the work of the action plan, we will be funding a two-year pilot project with Family Service Ontario. This project will explore the effectiveness of joint counselling for couples in lower-risk situational couple violence, and whether early intervention might lead to a prevention of future domestic violence.

This pilot will serve 100 couples who do not have the means to pay. Three pilot sites will be established—one northern, one rural and one urban—and a focus will be placed on serving the aboriginal community as well as francophone clients.

I thank Family Service Ontario for their hard work and for being at Queen's Park today.

#### PRIORITY HIRING OF VETERANS IN ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. The members of our Canadian Armed Forces make a commitment to our country that is virtually unparalleled. When they join up, they know that there is a very good chance they may be asked to fight on behalf of their country and to put their lives in danger. They do so willingly and unreservedly.

However, when they're ready to leave the forces, or have to leave due to a medical condition, they often don't have the easiest time finding new employment.

Premier, this afternoon I will be introducing a private member's bill, the Veterans Employment Act, that will allow current and past members of the Canadian Forces to be able to apply on a priority basis for Ontario government jobs, provided they are qualified.

Premier, will you stand with me and the Ontario PC caucus and support the principle of hiring veterans in the Ontario public service?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member opposite for the question and also thank him for his current and past advocacy for members of the Canadian Forces. I know that all members in this House value the hard work and the dedication of the Canadian Forces and the sacrifices that members of the forces make.

We're open to exploring any options that would demonstrate the value that we place on the forces. We know that the experiences and training and skills of the forces are valuable. They are valuable here in Ontario.

I haven't seen the bill. I haven't seen what the amendments to the public service act would look like, but certainly, we're open to looking at those.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Thank you, Premier. Premier, the average age of Canadian Armed Forces regular and reserve force personnel at release is 37. On average, there are 7,600 Canadian Armed Forces regular and reserve force personnel who leave the military each year.

Both the government of Canada and the province of New Brunswick have recently passed legislation that provides for priority hiring of veterans in their public services. As we are about to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, I cannot think of a more fitting time to consider how we can help the veterans of today.

Rather than a question, Premier, I'm going to thank you for your earlier response and hope that we can work together on moving this legislation forward. I welcome you to even steal the legislation as a Liberal idea. That would be fine with me.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I say, I look forward to looking at the amendments to the Public Service of Ontario Act.

I want to just take this opportunity to talk about some of the things that we have done that I think are in the same spirit that the member, in his advocacy, has brought forward.

We passed legislation that eliminates the 90-day OHIP waiting period for military families, to ensure that they have immediate access to quality health care. We amended the Employment Standards Act to create job protection provisions for military reservists who are called to serve either at home or abroad. We introduced veterans' licence plates to recognize the dedication and commitment made by past and current veterans—available free of charge—and in 2007, Ontario designated the portion of Highway 401 between Trenton and the Don Valley Parkway as the Highway of Heroes. All those things are consistent with the spirit of the private member's bill.

#### VISITOR

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I would like to take this time to introduce my intern, Alexandra Sherwin. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There being no deferred votes, this House is recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1145 to 1500.*

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville has provided me with a notice of his intention to raise a point of privilege. After carefully reviewing his notice, I have concluded that it deals with the same matter that was raised at the point of privilege yesterday by the member from Timmins–James Bay, which is under my active consideration.

I, therefore, will not be hearing from the member from Leeds–Grenville but your submission is noted and I thank you for that.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I stand today on behalf of Ontarians and Kitchener-Waterloo residents outraged by the shameful anti-BlackBerry petition presented by the Liberal member for Etobicoke North. While BlackBerry's trailblazing as the leader in secure mobile communications has meant all G7 governments have become BlackBerry customers, the member has suggested that BlackBerry use is "handicapping, retarding and penalizing MPPs." The member's choice of words is regrettable, offensive and, quite frankly, he should know better.

MPPs' smart phones are paid for by Ontario taxpayers and, given rampant privacy and security concerns, Ontarians expect their parliamentarians to utilize the most secure workspace available. As we know, with more security approvals than any other, the most secure workspace is provided by BlackBerry. Frankly, if the member wants the latest Apple apps or Snapchats with friends, he can do it on his own dime. Perhaps he should ask President Obama or the Department of National Defence if their use of BlackBerry is "handicapping and retarding" their work.

Shame on the member for his misguided attack. Is this the Wynne government's plan for building Ontario up? By tearing down a Canadian institution employing 4,700 Ontarians?

As the MPP for Waterloo region, I'm standing today to register my disgust. I encourage the Liberal member from Kitchener Centre to join me in standing up on behalf of her community to better inform her colleagues of BlackBerry's importance and prevent this type of offensive, reckless and insensitive attack.

### CULTURAL FUNDING

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Everybody probably knows already about the incredible Polish festival that takes place in my riding every year in September, on the same weekend we have the Ukrainian festival on Bloor Street. The Polish festival is the largest of its kind anywhere in North America and the Ukrainian one of the largest of its kind in North America. Literally millions of people go to both.

Up to 2013, it got stable funding from this government. As of 2013, the Wynne government cut the funding by 50% for our Roncesvalles Polish Festival, which, as you can imagine, really cripples their ability to organize. Not only did they cut the funding by 50% there and 20% for the Ukrainian festival, but there are no guarantees going forward after 2013 that they'll even get that.

There is no more stable funding for our festivals. This is shocking. I think it's shocking for our Polish and Ukrainian residents, and, by the way, they know and they're angry that they, going forward, cannot count on anything from the Wynne government.

I just have to say that it's a sad day. We still welcome you to the Polish and Ukrainian festivals, which, despite the Liberal government, will take place and will be successful. But I can tell you that they're doing it under duress.

Please restore the funding to our Polish festival on Roncesvalles and please restore the funding to our Ukrainian festival on Bloor.

### TERESA VASILOPOULOS

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** On May 1, an inspiring community leader from my fantastic riding of Beaches–East York retired from Toronto East General Hospital after 25 years of dedicated service. Teresa Vasilopoulos both resides and works in my riding and started her career at Toronto East General as a member of the hospital's communications department; 18 years ago she then moved over to the hospital's fundraising arm and has served as the president of the foundation ever since.

Surrounded by a remarkable team of physicians, staff, volunteers and board members, Teresa has seen firsthand the evolution of the Toronto East General Hospital from a small residential community hospital to one of Canada's leading hospitals for innovation, quality and fiscal management.

Teresa was at the forefront of the fundraising campaign that has raised over \$60 million for Toronto East General's new 380,000-square-foot patient-care tower. To be called the Ken and Marilyn Thomson Patient Care Centre, it will enable the delivery of efficient, accessible, high-quality patient care.

Teresa has also been at the lead of several other very important advancements, including the fundraising for a urology robot, which has propelled the local hospital into a leadership role in robotic surgery for prostate operations.

Another significant achievement due to Teresa's fundraising efforts is the hospital's progression into becoming a regional centre for lung cancer surgeries.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention the outgoing hospital president, Rob Devitt, and I look forward this Friday to meeting the new CEO, Sarah Downey.

This afternoon I will be participating in McHappy Day at McDonald's in my riding, with the proceeds going, at Teresa's suggestion, to the Toronto East General Hospital.

### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I rise today to discuss a very serious situation in my riding of Nipissing regarding the shortage of family doctors. In fact, the president of the North Bay Regional Health Centre is on record saying it



has reached a crisis level and that attracting family practitioners is a huge concern.

It's estimated the North Bay area is short at least 10 doctors, meaning 12,000 patients are without a family physician right now. That's more than 20% of the city's population. I would ask the health minister to envision what it would be like if a million patients in Toronto didn't have a family doctor, because that's the ratio we're talking about here. This crisis isn't manufactured or anecdotal. The North Bay and district health unit notes a 20% increase in the number of calls from people concerned about finding a family doctor in 2014, as compared with 2013.

Given this, it's disappointing to learn the province just recently barred new family physicians from joining team-based models of care, such as the family health teams, in the community of their choice.

The mayor of North Bay, among others, has proposed having all of northeastern Ontario, from Sudbury to Moosonee, declared an underserved region of the province. It's an idea I think needs consideration. I ask the minister to recognize the severity of the situation and commit to immediate action.

#### SUSTAINABLE WATERLOO REGION

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I'd like to take a moment to recognize an important announcement made by Sustainable Waterloo Region last Thursday at their sixth annual Evening of Recognition.

Sustainable Waterloo Region, a not-for-profit, is headquartered in Waterloo. It grew out of a business project at Wilfrid Laurier University in 2008. Their aim is to collaboratively advance the sustainability of organizations across Waterloo region by helping them to reduce their carbon footprints.

They also run the Regional Carbon Initiative. This is a project that is about helping organizations set and achieve their own carbon emission reduction targets. Sustainable Waterloo provides an online tool for measuring participating groups' carbon emissions and they organize educational forums and workshops for peer-to-peer learning about how to reduce emissions.

Finally, they work to provide as much public recognition as possible for those companies that are leaders and that are successful in reducing emissions. This collaborative model employed by Sustainable Waterloo Region is both innovative and successful because it utilizes organizations' and companies' own interests in becoming more sustainable.

Last week, Sustainable Waterloo Region made an important announcement that the newest member of the Regional Carbon Initiative is the Waterloo Region District School Board. We are all very excited about the announcement and I want to congratulate Sustainable Waterloo Region's executive director, Tova Davidson, for her continued leadership. Congratulations to the Waterloo Region District School Board and to Sustainable Waterloo Region.

#### EARTH DAY

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I have some positive news from my community that I'd like to share with you, from Waterloo region.

This past weekend, it was such a pleasure joining municipal and federal leaders in the region of Waterloo, the Grand River Conservation Authority and nearly 500 environmentally concerned residents for this year's Waterloo Earth Day.

Since 1970, Earth Day has catalyzed communities around the globe to take action on climate change and to get active in local climate change initiatives.

#### 1510

In our neighbourhood, we celebrated the spirit of Earth Day by planting trees, meeting woodland animals, building birdhouses and hearing from local experts on nature exploration, water wisdom and living locally. This free community event focused on learning about our environment and the native flora and fauna in our region through hands-on educational activities.

We know the vital importance of life-giving trees for a sustainable environment and a healthy population. With the planting of every new tree, we are mitigating the damaging effects of carbon pollution. I got a chance to plant a few trees myself. That is why I was also proud to bring greetings this year on behalf of the province, especially on the heels of our new political strategy on dealing with climate change. It was gratifying to hear support from many people who were there on this very ambitious plan.

To those who took part in Waterloo Earth Day, kudos to you for securing the legacy that we leave for future Ontarians.

#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Over the course of last weekend, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual meeting at the NAV Centre in Cornwall. Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry proved once again to be a wonderful region to host a large event, impressing guests with excellent facilities, great attractions and a welcoming community.

Representatives of the Ontario business community brought important messages to all three party leaders. Our interim leader, the member from Simcoe-Grey, listened.

Ontario is built on our skilled workforce and entrepreneurial drive. Ontario Chamber of Commerce members know that in order to thrive, this province needs ambitious workers and successful employers. Current policies pursued by this government stifle both.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce opposes initiatives that kill jobs and punish success, such as the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, the proposed cap-and-trade carbon pricing system, artificially inflated energy prices and other experiments carried out by this govern-

ment over the past decade that have resulted in hundreds of thousands of Ontarians unable to find work or retrain.

Entrepreneurs need a welcoming and competitive environment in order to thrive and have the confidence to invest in their people and their businesses. As legislators, we must foster a culture of success rather than the one of just scraping by that this current government is offering.

At the Cornwall AGM, we saw the builders of Ontario's prosperity come together, and we will remain committed—my PC caucus—to making that prosperity a reality.

#### AURORA FOOD PANTRY

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to stand today in the House to recognize an outstanding organization in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora. For the past 25 years, the Aurora Food Pantry has provided food to those in need. The clients who seek help at the Aurora Food Pantry do so because they face a dire situation. For many, it's an unexpected illness, accident or loss of income because of a crisis, which forces them to choose between paying for groceries, rent or utilities.

For 25 years, the Aurora Food Pantry has provided food assistance to individuals and families during these times of need. In 2014, the pantry helped feed more than 6,000 people in need of support, not only in Aurora but in surrounding communities.

The Aurora Food Pantry is able to provide this crucial service to our community due to the dedication of its volunteers, who are the backbone of this organization. The organization was founded by Lorna Rummenie in the basement of Aurora's First Baptist Church. Sadly, Lorna died this past fall, but I was able to meet her family and thank them for her dedication at the group's 25th anniversary this past Monday.

It takes a lot of people—all of them volunteers—to make a food pantry a success. I'd like to thank each and every one of them. Through conversations I've had with this pantry and others across the province, it's clear that we strongly agree on one thing: that governments, community and business must continue to work closely together to put food pantries out of business. Ultimately, that would be the greatest tribute to Lorna and the volunteers at the pantry.

#### FATHER CYRIL WILLIAM SULLIVAN

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Today, I will have the pleasure of attending the 40th anniversary celebrations of Father C.W. Sullivan School in my riding of Brampton–Springdale. It is a momentous occasion and I'm honoured to have the opportunity to share in a tribute to a man whose legacy continues to inspire.

Father C.W. Sullivan was born on February 9, 1901, at St. Paul's parish in Toronto. Father Sullivan was a strong advocate for Catholic education. He spent his entire academic life being educated in the Catholic school

system, including a bachelor of arts and a master's in philosophy from St. Michael's College.

In 1940 he would join the army as a chaplain, only to eventually end up in the battle areas of World War II. In 1943 he was on a ship when it was torpedoed off the coast of North Africa. He was lucky to have been saved by an Olympic swimmer who happened to be in the water with him.

After a much-deserved holiday, he decided to once again take up service when he returned to Brampton in 1946, and was appointed pastor of St. Mary's. He would continue to serve the community from 1946 to 1972, a period of 48 years, before his retirement.

In 1975, Father C.W. Sullivan School was built to pay tribute to Father Sullivan. Sadly, he passed away a short while after, in 1977.

Over the past 40 years, Brampton has seen a lot of growth, and with that growth, Father C.W. Sullivan School has been there to support Catholic families with their educational needs. Today his legacy lives on through the school as it continues to inspire young minds to pursue their dreams and improve not only their lives but also the lives of others.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

*Report adopted.*

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A point of order, please.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order: the member from Timmins–James Bay.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I did say “please.” I just noticed that the member from—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Simcoe North.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** —Simcoe North is here with his wife. I just want to welcome her and say: my condolences for being with him all these years.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not a point of order, but it's an interesting picture.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### VETERANS EMPLOYMENT ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'EMPLOI DES ANCIENS COMBATTANTS

Mr. Wilson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to amend the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006 / Projet de loi 97, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la fonction publique de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** The Veterans Employment Act adds a provision to the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006, to allow certain current and past members of the Canadian Armed Forces who have at least three years of service or who previously served for at least three years but have not been out of the forces for more than five to be able to apply for internally posted Ontario government positions, and give qualified veterans preference over other candidates in external hiring processes for jobs with the Ontario government.

The Veterans Employment Act, if passed, would help to put to work many, many deserving veterans who have served us overseas and here at home.

## MOTIONS

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding House proceedings for Monday, May 11, 2015.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader seeks to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you, Speaker. I move that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, May 11, 2015; and

That, following introduction of visitors, the Speaker shall adjourn the House during pleasure for the purpose of permitting an address to the House of up to 30 minutes by the Honourable Philippe Couillard, Premier of Quebec, and for remarks in reply of up to 10 minutes in duration each by each of the leaders of the recognized parties in the House; and

1520

That all remarks be delivered from the lectern at the head of the Clerks' table, and that for the purpose of these proceedings only, a party leader who does not have

a seat in the Legislature may enter the floor of the chamber; and

That following these proceedings, the Speaker shall resume the chair and shall then recess the House until 10:30 a.m. for oral questions or, if it is then past 10:30 a.m., shall immediately call oral questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Agreed? Dispense.

Do we agree? The motion is carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## CONSIDERATION OF BILL 80

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the consideration of Bill 80 by the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader seeks to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that, notwithstanding the orders of the House dated April 22, 2015, and April 30, 2015, providing for allocation of time on Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care, the Clerk of the Committee add Dr. Lanny Cornell to the prioritized list in place of the fifth selection provided to the Clerk by the Progressive Conservative subcommittee member.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding orders of the House dated April 22, 2015, and April 30, 2015, providing for allocation of time on Bill 80—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Does the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

"Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn't necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and almost

\$700 more per household annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

"Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

"Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

"Whereas this uncompetitive tax will not impact businesses outside of Ontario and will only serve to accelerate the demise of our once strong manufacturing sector; and

"Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of" introducing "yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses."

I agree with this and will be handing off to page Afiyah.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** We were joined by 200 guests this morning for Lyme, and there are 1,800 signatures on the petition that I have on my website. Also, here's another 240 signatures.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Jae Min to bring it down to the Clerks' table.

#### STUDENT SAFETY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with the petition, affix my signature and give it to page Colton.

#### HOSPICE FUNDING

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there is a discrepancy between how hospices are funded in Ontario; and

"Whereas Matthews House Hospice is the lowest-funded hospice in the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and among the lowest-funded in the province, even though it serves as many clients or more than other hospices that receive greater provincial support; and

"Whereas Matthews House has been told by the Central LHIN that LHINs do not fund residential hospice operational costs and yet hospices in other LHINs, including Barrie, Huntsville, Richmond Hill, Owen Sound and now Collingwood, all receive operational funding from the province; and

"Whereas in February 2010 Matthews House Hospice was promised a solution to its underfunding by the Central LHIN which has never materialized;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Wynne government immediately develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with hospice funding to ensure that people in south Simcoe and all Ontarians receive equal access to end-of-life care."

I certainly agree with this petition and I will sign it.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to



adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

It's my pleasure to affix my signature and give this petition to Afayah.

#### STUDENT SAFETY

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with this petition and I'm going to affix my name to it and pass it on to page Ashton.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

"Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

1530

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

I agree with this petition, sign my name and give it to page Madison.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from the patrons at the Legion in Capreol in my riding, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the NDP MPP for Timiskaming–Cochrane, John Vanthof, has introduced Bill 46 in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario so that UTVs (utility task vehicles) would be treated like all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) by the Highway Traffic Act;...

"Whereas this bill will have positive economic impact on clubs, manufacturers, dealers and rental shops and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

"To vote in favour of MPP Vanthof's Bill 46 to allow UTVs the same access as ATVs in the Highway Traffic Act."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Ashton to bring it to the Clerk.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to sign it and send it down to the table with page Jae Min.

## ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further petitions? The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

You took your leader's job too.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** He wasn't going to get up.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Legislature expressed its unanimous wish to see regulation 316/03 amended to include several categories of all-terrain vehicles; and

"Whereas law-abiding ATV enthusiasts from across the province expect this change in order to be able to use their legitimately owned vehicles recreationally and for participating in significant charity events; and

"Whereas the Minister of Transportation should respect the unanimous will of the Legislature;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately amend regulation 316/03 to allow the operation of two-up all-terrain vehicles."

I agree with this and will be passing it on to page Joshua.

## LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

I sign the petition and give it to page Ashton to deliver.

## SHALE BEACH

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

"Whereas the closure will impact fishermen, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

"Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

"Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come."

I certainly agree with this petition and will sign it.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Winchester District Memorial Hospital provides essential health services to the residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and was awarded 'accreditation with exemplary standing'—the highest award by Accreditation Canada earlier this year; and

"Whereas the projected increase in Ontario's senior population demands that facilities have the resources and capacity required to accommodate increasing demand; and

"Whereas Ontarians cherish access to high-quality local health care; and

"Whereas the recent closure of 14 beds at the WDMH and the loss of over nine full-time skilled staff positions at a time when Ontario has experienced unemployment above the national average for over seven consecutive years are the result of ongoing silent funding cuts that are threatening our cherished health care system;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately reinstate adequate funding levels for the Winchester District Memorial Hospital that would allow the reopening of local beds and the rehiring of local qualified front-line health staff."

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Chloe.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Auditor General of Ontario defines the global adjustment charge on hydro bills as 'an extra payment covered by ratepayers over and above the actual market price of electricity'; and

"Whereas wind power is simply unreliable, blows mostly at night when we don't need power, creating a surplus Ontario then has to get rid of by paying Quebec and the United States to take it, and the total cost of producing the exported power"—according to the



Auditor General—"was about \$2.6 billion more than the revenue Ontario received from exporting that power between 2006 and 2013; and

"Whereas the Auditor General says the global adjustment has risen from \$700 million prior to the Green Energy Act to \$7.7 billion by 2013, and over the past decade, the cumulated amount is about \$50 billion; and

"Whereas Ontario now has the highest industrial rates in North America, and residential hydro bills are forecast to increase 42% by 2018 after peak hydro rates have already more than tripled since 2003; and

"Whereas local First Nations, property owners and aviation and aerospace industry stakeholders have voiced concerns about wind farm installations proposed by Innergex in Merrick and Mattawan townships in the riding of Nipissing;

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the government of Ontario to reverse course on these proposed wind projects and the government's expensive energy policy by cancelling feed-in-tariff (FIT) subsidies, implementing an immediate moratorium on wind power development, and giving municipalities veto authority over wind projects in their communities."

I agree with this, sign my name and give it to page Colin.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. The time for petitions is over.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 22, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** When this matter was last before the House, the third party had finished their debate on it. I'll now turn it over to the government.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister of Transportation, who is clapping because we share a lot of common files and he has a lot of interest in the bill we're about to talk about today.

I want to begin by indicating, Mr. Speaker, that I'll be sharing my time with the incredible member from York South-Weston, whom we all know and love; and, I would say, the incorrigible member from Scarborough-Agincourt, who we also know—she is here as well.

1540

Before I start, though, I want to acknowledge a couple of our brand new interns who are here working with us today—if they could just stand up as I say their names. The first is Zuhair Zaidi—I've got to tell you, when I look at Zuhair's name, I see the "Z" and the "Z"; you must be at the end of every alphabetical line all the time, Zuhair—and Amanda Chapman-Solomon. Thank you two for being here, and I look forward to you having some time in my office.

Eddie: I have to acknowledge Eddie as well behind the Speaker's chair, because—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I guess that was a point of order, was it, the introductions there?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** No, Mr. Speaker. It's part of my speech.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Oh, okay. All right.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's absolutely part of my speech, because often, when we get up and speak in this House, we're supported by many in our offices who helped get the information that we bring forward.

I'm delighted today to get up to speak on second reading of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. It's a bill that's been before the House before, in the previous session, and it's now back again. It's a bill that I'm looking forward to talking about, a bill that I'm looking forward to seeing get to committee for further discussion.

I want to acknowledge the work of my parliamentary assistant on this bill, Peter Milczyn. He'll be doing the work on committee and working with my colleagues opposite as we take it through committee, assuming that it moves through the Legislature here, and I certainly hope it does.

What this bill does is it enshrines principles for long-term infrastructure planning in legislation. In many ways, it holds our feet to the fire as a government to ensure that we're thinking ahead when it comes to our infrastructure planning. It's something we take a great deal of pride in as a government, that over the previous 10 years, we have invested significantly in infrastructure. We've invested thoughtfully as well to ensure that the investments we make in infrastructure are meeting our infrastructure needs and, at the same time, helping to build our economy and make us more competitive, meeting the needs of our municipalities, meeting the needs of our health care system, meeting the needs of our transportation system, meeting the needs of our education system—and core investments like water/wastewater.

We've invested \$100 billion over the last 10 years. That's a record investment for any province and any government in this country. Every year, that creates about 100,000 jobs. Every single year it creates and supports.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, as you know, we'll be investing \$130 billion in roads, bridges and transit, in important infrastructure across this province. I've got to tell you that sometimes, those investments are

challenging in terms of finding the revenues to be able to make those investments.

One of the experiences I've had, having had the privilege to serve in a number of different posts in this Legislature, is that when you have complex challenges, there's two things you need to do: You need to get the best possible advice and then you need to have the wisdom and courage to take that advice.

When it came to finding the revenues we need, the dollars we need to be able to make that \$130-billion commitment, we did seek the best possible advice by bringing in Ed Clark, a well-known, very well respected—one of the most respected business leaders not just in Canada, but across North America, somebody who served as a deputy minister in Ottawa, and who has a great deal of experience and whose views are very highly regarded. We got the advice of Ed Clark in terms of how to broaden our ownership of Hydro One and how to be able to get some additional revenues so that we can reinvest in public transit—an important bit of advice, good advice, with a good business case attached to that advice.

At the same time, we as a government have had to have the courage to take that advice. There is a certain element of courage when it comes to making those challenging, tough and complex decisions.

One thing people in Ontario are tired of is politicians who talk about investing in infrastructure, who talk about how important they think our roads and bridges or our transit systems are, but don't at all pony up any ideas on how they would pay for it.

I think what the people of this province need, demand and deserve are leaders who are willing to take the tough decisions, who are willing to not only talk about infrastructure but to make the investments, to find ways to find the dollars to make the investments and build those projects, because you can't build the projects if you don't have the dollars to invest.

It would be helpful to all of us in this Legislature—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** And I know those heckling me right now would agree—I know they would agree—that if we had a strong federal partner when it comes to infrastructure, it would be much easier.

When you think about our \$130-billion investment over the next 10 years, the federal government, across the entire country, is only investing \$81 billion. In Ontario, Ontarians and our Ontario government have to invest three times the amount in our infrastructure. We're doing it because it's an important investment. We're doing it because it's really important to our future economy to ensure that we have modern infrastructure, that we can get people to and from their jobs and get people across our city, and so that our businesses can transport their goods across Ontario and transport their people across this province. We're going to make those important investments.

Another element of this bill that is really important, and something I'm really happy to see there, is the fact

that this bill is committing us to finding ways to utilize our infrastructure projects to grow the number of apprentices in this province, to take advantage of those young people and give them opportunities. Part of the job is committing ourselves, as a Legislature and as a government, to doing that, and we're going to do that.

The other challenge is figuring out exactly the “how.” How exactly will we put this? That will come by way of regulations, but it won't come from us just navel-gazing here in the Legislature about these issues—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Kitchener—Waterloo.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It will come from reaching out to our partners, Mr. Speaker—our partners in business and our partners in labour.

Just this past week, I had some really good meetings with James St. John, for instance, who is the head of the Central Ontario Building Trades and one of the directors of Hammer Heads, an organization that I think all members of this Legislature—including the one who is going to speak right after me—find very, very valuable.

We're looking forward to working with all of our partners to put into action this very good concept of utilizing our infrastructure projects to grow the number of apprentices, by working with those partners and developing the right way to do that.

One of the things I always look forward to when, as a minister, I bring forward a bill to the Legislature is the committee process, and I do look forward to constructive amendments from all sides of the House. I know that my parliamentary assistant, Peter Milczyn, is looking forward to working with my colleagues opposite to make this bill as effective as we possibly can.

When this went through the initial process, one of the good ideas that came forward was an idea from the engineers of this province, who indicated that they felt the value they bring to these projects ought to also be recognized in the legislation.

I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that we are very welcoming to amendments that would make that happen. I know that my parliamentary assistant will be working hard with committee to do his best to get the support at committee to bring those amendments forward. Certainly, I, as a minister, have said to the engineers across this province that this is something this government would wholeheartedly support.

I'm looking forward to the committee process. I'm looking forward to that amendment coming forward, and there may be others.

I'm also looking forward to our government moving forward with our agenda to continue to build transit, to continue to build roads and bridges across this province. It's so important that we continue to invest in building a modern infrastructure. As I said, it doesn't come without some degree of challenge. We need to find the money to make these investments.

I'll conclude by saying this: This government is investing more over the next 10 years than any government



has ever invested, including the federal government, in any period, any decade, in the history of Canada. It's something that we're proud of. It's something more than that. It's something that's crucial to us being able to maintain our competitiveness as an economy.

1550

I know that the members opposite like infrastructure investment. I encourage them to work with us and to support our efforts to make those tough decisions we have to make to actually fund and build those projects. Again, you can talk about it all you want, but if you're not putting the money forward, if you're not coming up with the revenue, if you're not finding ways to fund those projects, then those are hollow commitments, and that's all we've been hearing from the opposition, over the last number of years, when it comes to infrastructure. This is an opportunity for them to step up and join us in making those tough decisions and building modern infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

I'll now pass it over to my colleagues, who will continue this debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from York South–Weston.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I am pleased to rise in support of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, building modern infrastructure is part of our government's plan to continue to grow the economy and create jobs. That's very important, and it's why we are investing over \$130 billion—with a B, as one of my colleagues said yesterday—in public infrastructure over the next 10 years. It is a lot of money, but these investments are going to build much-needed infrastructure and will also support over 110,000 jobs every year. People need jobs, Mr. Speaker, especially our youth. They need jobs—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You know, you're 10 seats away and you're yelling at each other. Give me a break and go outside if you want to yell at each other.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You're not talking; you're talking loud.

Go ahead.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the key components of this legislation, as the minister pointed out, is the skills training and apprenticeship component: the requirement that certain numbers of apprentices be involved in the construction of provincial infrastructure assets, as prescribed in this legislation.

This point is of particular interest to my community of York South–Weston, the community I have the privilege to represent. It was one of the first to advocate in favour of community benefits in public procurement; that's how they're known. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is that public sector contracts would include targeted training for local residents where these infrastructure projects are taking place; for example, setting a percentage of the total labour.

The minister also mentioned the Central Ontario Building Trades Hammer Heads Program, which is located in my riding of York South–Weston. I'm very proud of this skill- and employment-based program within construction that offers apprenticeship career opportunities in this under-resourced neighbourhood and many others in the city and beyond. This bill does increase the opportunity for apprenticeships and invests in people's talents, and it really helps build our province.

The proposed legislation not only has this key component, but others that are very important; for example, the requirement that the government and the broader public sector consider specified principles when making infrastructure decisions, and the fact that the Minister of Infrastructure tabled a long-term infrastructure plan in the Legislature covering at least 10 years, so that we can have a vision and not just build ad hoc, prioritizing the projects according to what is needed, according to the municipal plans. I'm sure that my colleagues who follow me will be speaking more in depth about all these principles.

Lastly, the promotion of design excellence in public works would mean that if a project is over a certain size, architects and persons with demonstrable expertise and experience in design would have to be involved in these projects, whether they're transportation projects or cultural projects.

That's why I am pleased to support this bill. I will now pass it over to my colleague from Scarborough–Agincourt.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough–Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to speak in support of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014. I'm following the minister, as well as my colleague from York South–Weston, about the proposed bill, so I'm going to focus on the five components of the legislation.

The legislation clearly defines the principles of infrastructure. In section 3 of the proposed legislation, it clearly defines the principles of infrastructure. But there are five other components beside the principles part: long-term infrastructure, which my colleague talked about; project prioritization; promotion of designs; excellence in public work; and lastly—and I think my colleague from Timmins–James Bay talked about this—skills training and apprenticeship.

This proposed legislation, if passed, will also be supported by the budget that was presented by the Minister of Finance recently.

Very, very clearly, section 8 of the proposed legislation defines the word “apprentice” and the number of apprentices that will be hired under this proposed legislation. I'm not sure if the member from Timmins–James Bay actually read the budget book. But very, very clearly, page 30 of the budget says very specifically that since 2003, this government has put in—over \$164.5 million just last year alone. It talks about that.

The other piece here is that this bill that we are debating is being complemented by the budget bill. It is very,

very clear that what the member from Timmins–James Bay is arguing about is not clear about the apprenticeship stuff. But this bill, if passed, will be complemented by the budget.

In the budget book, it's spelled out very clearly. It says that we will be investing an additional \$13 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship programs; providing \$19 million over three years to increase the per diem for apprenticeship classroom training; and investing an additional \$23 million over two years in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund.

I am pretty sure, if this legislation is passed, and, on top of it, if the budget is passed, I think we will have additional apprentices being hired across the province of Ontario.

The other piece of the proposed legislation that I know the members opposite will be very keen to hear about and, as well, read in the proposed legislation: In section 3, dealing with principles, it talks about the transparency of infrastructure planning and investment.

In section 3.7, it says, "Infrastructure planning and investment should be evidence based and transparent, and, subject to any restrictions or prohibitions under an act or otherwise by law on the collection, use or disclosure of information,"—very, very clearly, Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislation, if passed, will ensure further transparency but, more importantly, the evidence-based infrastructure planning.

The other piece of the proposed legislation also talks about the types of personnel that are required in terms of doing infrastructure designs. In section 7 of the legislation, on page 7, it talks about the requirement of architects' and other professionals' involvement in preparing the planning and construction of infrastructure projects. It defines who the architects are, under the Architects Act, and other professionals' groups.

I'm encouraging members of the House—I know they're going to be very interested in debating the proposed bill. But, more importantly, I think the minister spoke earlier about how this bill will go before the committee for further dialogue with the stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak on the proposed Bill 6.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Very shortly, I'll be giving my 20-minute speech on Bill 6, so let me use this two-minute opportunity to respond to the minister, who said, "Where do we get the revenue?"

Speaker, this government never thinks twice about where they're going to get the revenue. This time, it's a new pension tax. It's a new carbon tax. It's a new beer tax. It's a further extension of the aviation fuel tax. It's just tax, tax, tax. That's what they want to do, Speaker. That's where their immediate go-to is: into your pocket for some kind of new tax.

1600

The best income, when they ask, "Where do you get the revenue?" is from people who have a job. You put

people to work and you earn revenue. When people are working, that's the best revenue that a government can have. Why they won't go there, why they won't talk about people being put to work, is because we have the highest energy rates in North America. We have the highest payroll taxes in Canada. We have crippling red tape. This is the area that the government needs to fix. Instead of jumping in and looking at the solutions to fix our energy, to fix our payroll taxes and to work on red tape, they would just ignore all that, ignore putting people to work, snap their fingers and raise taxes. Speaker, that's where they think the revenue will come from, and now you know where we think the revenue will come from: from putting people back to work.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Yes, on a point of order. First of all, I'd like to welcome some guests who have come this afternoon to Queen's Park: Kaitlin Cain, Heather Murphy, Kyle St. Aubin, Amanda Benton—not bad, eh? Not bad—and Steven Wright. Welcome to Queen's Park. I hope you're enjoying yourself, and I hope you're enjoying the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Niagara Falls will do the questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Now I'll do the question and comments. I want to talk about the comments that were made by the Minister for Economic Development. He talked about P3s and about how we're going to pay for infrastructure. So I'm going to say the Auditor General's report criticizes the level of transparency and public reporting of P3 projects that have been assessed.

That said, there currently exist serious arguments that, far from decreasing the tax, the debt burden of future generations, P3s have done just the opposite. Until they are truly independent assessments, proving that these private partnerships offer viable and cost-effective models, the current evidence seems to suggest that they are a bad deal for Ontario.

Some \$8.2 billion were spent on P3s. The Auditor General said you should never have done it. And what comes out of that? Well, let's see. You sell off Hydro because you're trying to make that up. Higher costs for small businesses. Higher costs for medium businesses. Higher costs for companies like General Motors, who are looking to go elsewhere because of that.

In my last 20 seconds, if you ask me where you're going to get the money, let's add this up: \$8.2 billion on P3s that the Auditor General said you should never have done; \$1 billion on a gas plant; \$1 billion on eHealth; \$1 billion on Ornge. That adds up to \$12 billion. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon on Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. I want to thank the minister and the members from York South–Weston, Scarborough–Agincourt, Nipissing and Niagara Falls for their comments so far.

The member from Scarborough–Agincourt listed the series of principles that are lodged within this bill; most



importantly, that there shall be a long-term infrastructure plan. The government is committing this government, and hopefully future governments, to maintain a long-term infrastructure plan so we do not find ourselves again having lost decades of no infrastructure being built.

It talks about project prioritization, which is also about the depoliticization of the process: having a long-term infrastructure plan, setting priorities, making decision-making transparent.

It talks about design excellence, because when you spend billions of dollars on infrastructure, it's an opportunity to also enrich and make the various communities that benefit from this infrastructure more vibrant.

It also talks about skills training, Mr. Speaker, about ensuring that we train young people to have the skills required to build and maintain the infrastructure that this province needs to have a healthy and prosperous economy in the decades to come.

We know what happens when there's a government that chooses not to invest in infrastructure. The result is that Ontarians lose billions and billions of dollars each year in lost productivity. In the GTA, Ontarians are losing \$11 billion a year in productivity through gridlock. Previous governments tore Ontario down; we're building Ontario up, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** That's certainly a tough pill to swallow when we see the results of this government. This government is taking in over \$35 billion every year more than the previous government did. They talked about 10 years and no infrastructure. To \$35 billion you add on the \$10 billion—or actually \$12 billion—in deficits, you're up around \$45 billion in extra revenue every year. Where have you been putting it? I was mayor of South Glengarry. All you did was—the money we used to get, you took that away from us. If it wasn't for the federal gas tax, we'd have had no increase in the last years.

My replacement has applied for some of this money. They say, "You're in too good shape. You can borrow more money." The answer is, make sure you borrow at your limit. Make sure that everybody in this province has borrowed to the point that they can't borrow anymore, and then we may help you. This is where we've gone.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Act like a Liberal and you'll get money.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** That seems to be the message.

You've had money for a decade here that you've squandered, and it hasn't gone to infrastructure. It's gone to pet projects—failed pet projects—like the Ornge air ambulance. Look at the power plants. Decisions that are made to benefit whom? I don't know. I guess I know who, but I shouldn't be saying here.

You look at the cost of the Green Energy Act—\$8 billion a year. Imagine if that money went to infrastructure. That's the cost that the Green Energy Act is costing every year. The ratepayers of Ontario are paying that.

Now, to pay for your program here, you're looking at selling off Hydro One—another project where you're

selling off the assets without paying down the debt. The people who own Hydro One, the ratepayers, are now going to have to go back and increase rates even higher than you've published, to pay for it. Money doesn't grow on trees. We're not piggybanks here. It's time to be responsible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister has two minutes.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I may not agree with them, but I appreciate the fact that the members from Nipissing, Niagara Falls, Etobicoke—Lakeshore—of course, I agreed with everything he had to say—and Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry—I appreciate them for participating in the debate. Man, it must be tough to go through life being that negative; it really must be. I feel for you.

When I hear talk from one of the members opposite about creating jobs, and I think of all we've done over the last number of years to move Ontario from one of the highest effective corporate tax rates in North America to one of the lowest, that gives us a competitive advantage. To build up the most talented workforce anywhere, frankly, in the world by our investments in post-secondary, where we have the highest level of attainment to post-secondary in the OECD, they would say that—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** It's not the highest.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** He just said that it's not the highest. He's wrong; it is.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** He doesn't even know what I'm talking about here because he's not listening, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about the record amount of infrastructure investments that we have made—investments they don't support, investments they kind of talk about, but never would have the courage to fund. When we talk about the investments we've made in innovation, creating—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Simcoe North.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Toronto's now number six in the world in start-ups; Waterloo is 16. This Toronto-Waterloo-Ottawa corridor is presenting some of the best entrepreneurs anywhere. That's why we're up 524,500 net new jobs—192% in jobs.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Nipissing.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The member is laughing. It's absolutely true.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** That's Stats Canada true. I've got to tell you—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I guess you weren't listening—

**Interjection:** That's a warning.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** First warning.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's not by accident, Mr. Speaker, that we're number one in North America for the third

year in a row in attracting foreign direct investment. That is, others, outside of Ontario, voting with their dollars to invest in this province because of the important decisions we've made, decisions that those on the other side opposed.

1610

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. And I thank the member for doing my job, too. Thanks so much.

The member from Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill 6. The bill is a crucial step toward implementing aspects of transparency in the government planning process; however, further steps must be taken to ensure the minister partakes in a thorough and transparent consultation process.

The purpose of the bill is to encourage long-term, evidence-based infrastructure planning that supports job creation and training opportunities, economic development and environmental protection. I'll speak a little bit about whether this legislation can actually achieve that goal.

On February 18, 2014, the then MPP for Newmarket–Aurora, Frank Klees, as our infrastructure critic, spoke at length on an identical government bill, Bill 141, for those of us who were here, which had been introduced in a previous Parliament. He spoke in favour of its principles.

I'll mention one issue with the bill, and that was section 7.1, as it contained a significant omission. While it detailed a specific role for architects, it was entirely silent on the specific role for professional engineers. I believe, like I would think many of us do, that most infrastructure jobs require the service of engineers. The Professional Engineers Act stipulates that any infrastructure project of 600 square metres or larger requires the services of a professional engineer. That was a startling omission, quite frankly, with regard to Bill 141.

Our staff attended a ministry briefing on this bill on July 16 of last year. I was disappointed that we were given no slide deck to support the ministry's presentation; only the bill and the compendium notes were provided. We asked for a copy of their presentation; they committed to sending it to us, and we are still waiting to receive it.

In summary of the bill, it requires the minister to develop a long-term infrastructure plan which must set out a description of government-owned infrastructure assets, a description of anticipated infrastructure needs for at least the next 10 years and a strategy to meet those needs. Each plan must be made public.

Once the bill comes into force, the government will have three years to table its first report. The plan must be 10 years in scope and must be tabled in the Legislature no later than five years after the day the previous report was tabled.

The government must consider a list of criteria when prioritizing proposed projects for construction of infrastructure assets. Some of the specifics are: Infrastructure planning and investment should take a long-term view and should take into account the needs of all Ontarians.

Infrastructure planning and investment should take into account any applicable budgets or fiscal plans.

Infrastructure priorities should be clearly identified.

Infrastructure planning and investment should ensure the continued provision of core public services.

Infrastructure decisions should promote economic productivity, competitiveness, job creation and training opportunities.

It's all sounding good so far, with some amendments that we'll provide, but the government must, as I mentioned earlier, require—the act actually says that the government must require that architects and persons with demonstrable skills in infrastructure design be involved in the construction design of infrastructure assets. Again, it leaves out the words “engineers” and “engineering”; it's specific about architecture.

Let me tell you why that's very specific in here. As we talk about infrastructure, they like to talk about “infrastructure, roads” and “infrastructure, transit.” In reality, why they say “architects” here is because historically 60% of all infrastructure is bricks and mortar. It's buildings: hospitals, schools. That's infrastructure as well. When they talk about infrastructure, they want you to think immediately that it's a subway or that it's transit—all good things. But let's be accurate here, Speaker. Why it says “architects” is because, despite all the rhetoric, “infrastructure” to this government means buildings—60% of it. Eleven per cent of infrastructure in Ontario is equipment, and 5% of infrastructure is IT. There's about 4% that's miscellaneous. That leaves 20% for roads, bridges and transit. That's the reality.

That's why they said “architects” and not “engineers,” who would build roads, bridges and subways; it's not all about transit, despite how they like to put that front and centre. Sadly it's not all about transit.

“The government must require that certain numbers of apprentices be employed or engaged in the construction or maintenance ... of infrastructure assets.” As you heard us responding earlier, Mr. Speaker, we just had a major cut in the budget of our apprentice program. Tax credits are being cut, not only for the film industry and the digital media industry, as you spoke of so well this morning in question period, Mr. Speaker, but also for the apprentice program. They rob from Peter to pay Paul. They do that all the time. It's all they know how to do.

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may add services covered under infrastructure or remove “physical structures or facilities from the definition.” Now we know what this whole thing is about. When it comes to the important issue of infrastructure in the province, Speaker, this is a policy that we can only pray, for a change, will be above politics. When committing to an infrastructure project, assuming that it has been planned and prioritized properly, once the decision has been made to invest in that infrastructure project, it should be beyond politics. You shouldn't sit there with a map of the ridings in Ontario, and the colouring in them, and pick your infrastructure projects based on that, as we have so sadly seen in the past.

*Interjection.*



**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** To anybody who balks at that, Speaker, all I have to say is three words: gas plant scandal. Gas plant: That's all about moving infrastructure to save five Liberal seats. That's what this government is about. When it comes to infrastructure, it's all about secretly bailing out the MaRS building across the street from here—\$300 million, \$400 million, \$500 million—and not telling us about it, leaving it to a whistle-blower to tell us about it four years later. That's their concept of infrastructure. That's what they think about infrastructure: pawns to move around, to be able to satisfy political requirements. That's what needs to end in Ontario.

I want to speak to the need for long-term planning for infrastructure—true long-term planning. The government has made reference to the importance of having an inventory of infrastructure assets in this province. I completely agree. In fact, they've made reference to the fact that infrastructure planning and investment should take into account, of course, applicable budgets or fiscal plans. Speaker, on paper, it sounds great. What does this mean?

I was at an OPG luncheon today, and our table had some regional mayors. We talked about this exact issue. Somebody else in the Legislature has talked about it as well in the last hour. If your municipality is in great fiscal shape, great financial shape because you worked so hard as a mayor and as a council to keep that budget aligned, then you are punished under this program, by the way.

1620

I live in Corbeil, down the street from where the Dionne quints lived—just across the street from there, as a matter of fact. Billy Vrebosch has been our mayor in Corbeil for more than 30 years. While I was mayor of North Bay, he was mayor of Corbeil, where I lived. I can tell you, he treated every nickel as if it was his own. He squeezed every penny. I admired that in Billy; I still do.

They have no debt. It's pay as you go. I drive down the streets. My garbage is picked up. The plowing is done. He scrimped every penny to make sure that we were in good fiscal shape. Because Corbeil is in such good shape, they're not entitled to this kind of money. He showed me the letter, and other mayors at lunch today talked about the letters that they received. The letter basically says, "Your finances are in great shape. You don't need our money. Because your finances are in such great shape, you have the capacity to borrow, so we're not giving you money. You can go and borrow it. The guy next to you—well, they're not in great shape. They've deteriorated their finances. They can't borrow, so we need to help them."

As we've said so often, Speaker, it picks winners and losers. In fact, it makes winners and losers, so I guess, in a sense, it mirrors this government. They like to borrow to pay for everything. It's not pay as you go; they use the credit card to buy things instead of their debit card. When a family is in trouble, when somebody loses a job, you cut back. Not these guys. They get the credit card oiled up, and out they go on a spending spree—\$2.4 billion more last year than the year before. That's what these guys want to do. That's their way.

They've said to all these municipalities, "Look, follow our bad habits. Your finances are so good, you don't need our money. You can afford to go and borrow. Do what we do. Go and borrow, and charge all the interest to your constituents." That's what they want to do. That's what this program does.

I want to also talk about the issue of inventory of assets. I think everybody would agree that it's hard to make an intelligent and responsible decision about which infrastructure project should be prioritized if we don't know the existing infrastructure inventory and the state of repair or disrepair.

There's no better example in this Legislature than the state of repair or disrepair of Ontario Northland. I remember when the passenger train was still running. As an MPP, I would enjoy taking the train to Toronto; 1 o'clock or 1:05, I think, was the time of the train. It was a beautiful train ride down here. You could use your laptop; there was a sandwich car; the whole thing. I remember taking the train from North Bay up to—I had to go to Cochrane, so I took the train. The engineer was a buddy of mine from school. He said, "Oh, Vic, come on up and take a ride in the locomotive."

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Did you get to blow the whistle?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I got to blow the whistle.

But something more interesting than blowing the whistle occurred in that locomotive. I had several hours—because it was a few hours, as the member well knows, when the train was running. The train ride from North Bay to Timmins was a few hours. I looked ahead because we had slowed down quite a bit, and I said, "What's going on?" There were red marks painted on the rails and on the ties. "This is the seven-kilometre zone." The train can propel no faster than seven kilometres at that point.

Then we got to a point where there were some yellow lines painted—

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** You could get out and walk and let it pick you up when it caught up to you.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, pretty much.

Then there were yellow lines where we could go up to 10 kilometres. Then there were green lines, and we could resume.

The point is, the equipment, especially in the last dozen years, hadn't been upgraded. The state of repair—or, in this case, disrepair—was not known, and when it was known, nothing was done about it.

That's the problem that is occurring in Ontario today. It's a great example when you don't know what you're talking about, when you don't know the company that you're talking about.

A further example of Ontario Northland: This government not understanding the importance of rail maintenance is one thing; not understanding their own contracts that they had when they announced the fire sale of Ontario Northland—I remember the minister standing up and saying, "We're going to save \$265 million a year." I remember the analysis that we quickly did, and said, "That's not even possible. You don't know what

you're talking about. You don't know how to dig into the books." They did not know, the government here, according to the Auditor General, that the rail workers had 14-year severances and that would account for a considerable amount of money. The government did not know that the Ontera workers had six-year severances.

When you don't know anything about the asset that you own, a crown agency—in this case, Ontario Northland—how can you proceed with infrastructure? They made terrible mistakes. Of course, I called the Auditor General in when we found one of the secret documents—again, back to that treasure trove we got from the gas plant scandal inquiry—that said, "Oh, by the way, we made a mistake." This is from minister to minister. "We made a mistake. We just realized we've got these severances," after you've announced \$265 million in savings. "It's going to cost us \$790 million to let this company go." We called the auditor in. It was a bombshell. It wasn't \$790 million; it was \$820 million. That's because they don't know the asset inventory. They didn't understand that. They didn't understand the infrastructure. The easiest thing for them to do, of course, was to just shut down the railway, which is why we can't take the train from North Bay to Timmins anymore or North Bay to Toronto.

But this isn't the only infrastructure bungle this government is guilty of. I'm not sure if Bill 6 will address it or not, but it's the colossal delays with respect to the Ring of Fire. As I've said many times here, I've been to the Ring of Fire four times, and I'm so discouraged. You want an infrastructure program in Ontario that will put people to work and identify to the minister where we are going to get the revenue? You're going to get the revenue from the jobs. There's no greater revenue in Ontario than revenue from somebody having a job. We don't need to have a carbon tax and we don't need to have the pension tax and a beer tax and the aviation fuel tax. All we need is people to have a job. Sometimes you've got to spend a buck to make a buck. As a lifelong entrepreneur, I can tell you that you do have to do that.

It's so saddening to go up to the Ring of Fire, where, in 2011, the first time I was there, there were 250 men and women working. They were drilling exploration holes. It was fascinating to see. There were all these camps and all the equipment that was there. It was so exciting. My last trip, in 2014, was the most disappointing, because it was the day Cliffs was physically packing the camp and moving away. Since then, they've sold the camp to Noront, and since then they've sold the entire stake to Noront. They've moved out of Ontario. They're gone, like Kellogg's and Heinz and Caterpillar and General Mills and Wrigley. Well, add Cliffs. They're gone because we didn't commit to the infrastructure.

They can talk about it all they want. I've been there four times. They have not spent one penny. That's the depressing news in all of this, those jobs—not just northern Ontario jobs, the engineering firms that are here in Toronto, Ottawa, London, all through Ontario. There are firms everywhere producing drill rods, drill bits, steel,

cable, food—you've got to feed all these people up there. All of those jobs—the 250, the exploration guys and gals, they're all gone. The camp is just running on life support, just enough to keep the water flowing. That's infrastructure. That's the kind of development that we need.

**1630**

They've had 12 years now to write a 10-year plan. They're still talking about a 10-year plan.

Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak again on this topic.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I want to take this opportunity to respond to some of the comments that were made by the honourable member. First of all, on the question of the Ontario Northland, I've always believed it was part of the government's strategy to underfund the Ontario Northland and to allow the infrastructure to weaken itself so that the riders wouldn't continue using the service, so that you could make the argument to get rid of it. That's essentially what they did.

If we were to take that approach with GO Transit—and I argue that we should never take that approach—the same types of things would happen to the GO services that we currently have. People would find what we found in northeastern Ontario: that there was a very needed service that was being neglected.

As a result, yes, there was less ridership, but if we would have made the investments that we had to on trackage, if we would have made the investments that we had to on new equipment, we could have actually sped up the train service from, I would argue, Cochrane down to Toronto—because the Polar Bear Express is north. We would have been able to speed up the time of that train, where more people would have taken it. We could have looked at options, such as having a night train versus a day train. There are a number of things that we could have done that would have increased the ridership on that line.

The government did everything they could to basically frustrate people's usage of that train. This from a government that says, "We believe in transit. We need to make investments in transit." Where were you for northerners when you had a chance to stand up and invest in inter-city rail between our communities? You disappointed everybody by doing what you did for a number of years in order to not support that particular service, and then your argument was to privatize it.

As the member points out, it turned out to be a real bad deal. Well, that doesn't bode well for your Hydro deal, which you're now trying to make, which essentially is going to be a fiasco when it comes to who makes money and who has to pay the bill at the end. It's going to be us, the consumers and the businesses of this province, who will see our hydro bills go up yet again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Etobicoke Centre.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Speaker, when I talk to my constituents, I hear about a range of issues, but there are a



couple that keep coming up frequently. One is, they talk about how important it is that we build up our province for the future; that we not only ensure our prosperity today, but that we do that for the future.

I think this budget has a number of measures—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Yvan Baker:**—and judging from the heckling, the opposition agrees—that we invest for the future to ensure the quality of life for people in the future, but also that we sustain our economy for the future. Those are two things that are critical. That's why the investments in infrastructure that are proposed in this budget are so important.

I also hear from people in the community about how important it is that we do so while managing taxpayer dollars wisely. I think that Bill 6 helps us to do both. I think it helps us to do both because it holds our feet to the fire, as the minister was saying earlier, to ensure that we have a long-term infrastructure plan, and it makes sure that we do it with the right criteria in place, but it also makes sure that we do so sustainably.

When I think about the experience that I bring to the Legislature, it's from a private sector, business perspective. I worked with companies to help them ensure that they plan their future sustainably. When we look at future sustainability and making investments in the future, a lot of the things that are in this bill are the kinds of things that some of the best-run organizations, both private and public sector, do.

As an example—and I can't talk to it all in the limited time that I have left—a few things: This requirement that the Minister of Infrastructure table a long-term infrastructure plan covers at least 10 years. This is long-term thinking. One of the reasons that we haven't had the infrastructure investment over the years that we would have loved to have had it is because we haven't had that same sort of planning. This is holding our feet to the fire to make sure that happens. It ensures that we take into account key priorities, long-term return on investment, maximizing tax base growth, stimulating productivity, economic competitiveness.

My time is up, but all this said, this is a bill that supports long-term planning, our long-term prosperity, our long-term economy. It does so sustainably. That's what the people of Etobicoke Centre deserve.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's great to get up and talk about the informed words of my colleague from North Bay.

I think that the idea that revenue should come from income taxes is a great view, because it means people are working. We're sitting here today, and it's 99 months that our unemployment rate has been higher than the national average. That's one of the highlights, or the records, that they can take credit for.

You look at the difference in revenue of this government: last year, \$118.9 billion in revenue. The year they took over, it was \$66.5 billion. They've got the availability of \$52 billion more in revenue, and add on the \$10

billion of deficit: Look at the money they had that the previous government—and they still don't have enough money to put into infrastructure. I don't know what an extra four, five, six billion would do. When you waste money like that, it just shows that there's no commitment, no priorities.

On top of that, we look at the billions that aren't included in that, like the hydro costs that actually go back to ratepayers. They're paying, what, \$8 billion a year in subsidies on the electricity bill? And we wonder why our unemployment rates are so high. Our employers are being taxed to death, and as far as this government is concerned, it's not enough. They're looking at a carbon tax; they're looking at an aviation tax. When is enough enough? That's a phrase that I'm starting to hear more around home as well as up here. People are fed up. They've given this government this much extra revenue and they're still out of cash. It's just sad.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm going to continue what I talked about in the last couple of minutes, about the \$8.2 billion, and the up to \$12 billion that was wasted, because the question is, how are we going to pay for it?

Can you imagine what we could have done with that \$12 billion? We could have spent it on infrastructure; we could have spent it on education. Think about education, because that's a big issue today in the province of Ontario.

"Teachers were itching" for a strike. Can you imagine: If we had taken that \$12 billion and put it into education, we wouldn't have to be looking at increasing class sizes, we wouldn't have to be looking at a strike today, and we wouldn't have to be looking at closing schools. There is nobody in the province of Ontario—in the members that I represented for over 40 years—who has said to me, "Is there any way we can go on strike?" Nobody ever says that. What they want to do is, they want to go to work. They want to earn a fair pay with fair benefits. That's what they want to do, union or non-union. I don't think anybody wants to be out of work.

So for this minister to say that teachers were itching for a strike is—I wish she was still here; she just left, unfortunately. You could have used that \$12 billion.

And I want to—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You sit down first, and then you take it back.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** No, that's not good: "Okay." Stand up and do it properly. You withdraw.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Continue.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** The second point I want to talk about is the selling of hydro. You talk about a big mistake—selling off hydro. I had a call last week from the tourist sector that owns all the major hotels in

Niagara Falls. Think about this: They, who quite frankly aren't normally NDP supporters, called me and they said, "What am I going to do? It has gone up twice as much during prime time." He says, "I own a hotel. I've got thousands and thousands of people from all over the world in my hotel. What do you want me to do—turn the lights out? I can't afford this. What can I do?"

Selling off hydro is going to increase that again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Nipissing has two minutes.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I want to also thank the members from Timmins—James Bay, Etobicoke Centre, Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and Niagara Falls.

Speaker, as you can see from the examples I outlined in my 20 minutes, this government can hardly be trusted with infrastructure planning or funding—or, actually, can't be trusted to have anything to do with job creation or job creation numbers.

All we have to do, Speaker, is look at the Green Energy Act claims. They said that 50,000 jobs would be created under the Green Energy Act. The latest freedom-of-information said, I think, it was 2,340. The Auditor General told us that for every one job created, two to four are lost in other sectors. This government cannot be trusted to give us any numbers.

If this government was serious about transparency and building infrastructure, as opposed to photo ops and reannouncements of reannouncements—they're very good at those—they would have included the amendments that we proposed last year into the Trillium Trust Act, which were not implemented as part of the bill.

The act said that a "portion" of the sale of assets "may" be put into the Trillium Trust. Those are the wiggly words that gave the government room to manoeuvre and not have to commit money to infrastructure.

1640

In closing, we support the objectives and principles laid out here. I look forward to seeing the amendments our caucus will bring forward to the committee. But when it comes to this government's record on infrastructure planning, they simply cannot be trusted.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** There are a number of issues I want to touch on as they relate to Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015. Of course, this is second reading, so some of us have had an opportunity to address some of our concerns.

I think it's important, though, for us to point out very clearly that this bill calls for long-term, life cycle infrastructure planning. Well, who doesn't want that? This essentially is a bill to say, "Let's really think about this, and let's plan for it." You have to do that for infrastructure; that just makes sense. Unfortunately, though, the record on infrastructure funding and planning from the Liberal government thus far has been inconsistent at best.

Actually, I'm being kind when I say that, because the promises that have come and gone are actually moving

targets, with one exception. They did want to kill the Ontario Northland train, and that did happen. So there's no train anymore. I will never forget one of the members across the aisle saying, "Well, let them drive." You know what? Northerners have to drive a lot. They don't have the sort of public transit infrastructure that some of us enjoy in urban centres, but they also have to deal with the road maintenance issues that the Auditor General recently raised—a huge concern.

The fact that this government tried to save \$36 million by contracting out road maintenance to private industry when those companies didn't even have the equipment to do the work is quite something. It comes back to oversight—it actually always does—and it also comes back to accepting responsibility. So those 200 legal cases based on subpar road maintenance issues—some of them were deadly—have been brought to the courts. Obviously there's a lot of trauma involved in that, and there's no savings there; so, again, short-sighted. Perhaps, if I was feeling relatively generous, I might point out that they would have to bring forward a piece of legislation that basically mandates some level of common sense on infrastructure planning.

I want to address the jobs and prosperity component of this legislation, though. It's hard for me not to think of some of the short-sighted decisions that have been made, most recently in the 2015 budget. Yesterday and the day before, we've been talking with some of the stakeholders in this province who are very concerned around jobs, because obviously, as the former member mentioned, without jobs we will not have prosperity. In this budget, the side of the ledger that actually deals with revenue generation is, quite honestly, very weak around job creation and investment.

FilmOntario is actually one of those stakeholders that was completely blindsided by this budget—by the tax credit cuts. You have to remember that this is an industry that really has been slowly rebuilding post-SARS. The industry will tell you that it takes around 10 years to recover from a major blow like what was delivered in the budget last week.

Just to give you some sense of how unprecedented this is, Mr. Speaker, FilmOntario goes on to say, "While we understand the government's responsibility to meet fiscal objectives in a balanced fashion, the approach taken in the budget to implement proposed rate cuts to OPSTC and the OCASE tax credits, effective immediately, threatens to destabilize the entire film and TV business in Ontario."

How short-sighted can you get? Perhaps that's why this piece of legislation is needed, but the problem is that this piece of legislation, which charges the government to plan ahead, if you will, would not have stopped this decision.

FilmOntario goes on to say, "The immediate implementation means hundreds of lost jobs and business impacts now, as well as shrinking volumes due to reputational damage that could result in job losses in the thousands." This province cannot afford to lose any more jobs.



"It is distressing to think that the government would upend a billion-dollar industry over poorly planned deployment of changes in order to save the sum of \$10 million this fiscal year."

In fact, they won't even achieve the \$10 million. That won't happen. Really, this cut comes directly from the Treasury Board because, if the finance minister was looking at the economic impact of a policy shift as drastic as this, hopefully someone in finance would do the math and come to the conclusion that film and television alone, in 2013-14, brought in \$1.8 billion in direct investment and over 31,000 direct FT jobs, not counting the spin-off industries and jobs. We haven't even heard from the hotels and restaurants and the car rental agencies—all of those other sector partners that are going to see a drastic negative impact.

For them to bring forward a piece of legislation like Bill 6, saying that the government needs a law to make sure that we make good decisions—that's essentially what this piece of legislation does—for the most part, it is window dressing. When you think of this consistent short-sightedness around fiscal planning, in this case around the Treasury Board, where for a measly \$10 million but likely under \$10 million, you're compromising a very successful industry, it's shocking.

"FilmOntario would, at the very least, ask that the government grandfather these tax credits so that the projects that are already on the ground"—already in Toronto; they're in production. Even in my own community of Kitchener-Waterloo, there are animators who know that those tax credits sometimes are the tipping point to job creation and to holding investment here in Ontario. I can't speak out enough about this issue.

But it is indicative of the way that this government seems to operate. Last year, there were 6% cuts in every ministry except for five. This year, there are 5.5% cuts in every ministry except for four. These cuts are doubling down on austerity. You will never rebuild the economy by staying focused on austerity measures. It has never proven to be successful.

FilmOntario goes on to say, "For a long time, Ontario has been regarded as open for business to investors in our industry, and the Ontario government has been incredibly supportive and key in helping to build Canadian success stories." It was working. The tax credits were working, and they're a very accountable way of supporting industries. They go on to say, "But implementing the rate changes immediately without grandfathering will overnight undo trust built up over years" and our reputation as one of the most predictable and stable jurisdictions for producing film and television in the world. And, Mr. Speaker, it is not just foreign productions that are being hurt. "So many are VFX and animation, domestic co-productions, co-ventures and small and medium-size Ontario producers who choose to use the OPSTC. Companies will divert their resources to other jurisdictions. They will lay off staff. In some cases, they will close."

Mr. Speaker, you can bring in a piece of legislation which essentially says, "Take a long-term view." Well,

clearly, nobody was taking a long-term view when they proposed a tax credit cut for these two lines in the budget. It also says that "decision-makers should take into account the needs of Ontarians by being mindful of ... demographic and economic trends in Ontario." Anybody who steps outside of this House and talks to people in this province will realize that people are hurting, and they can't find jobs. Precarious, contract, part-time work is the new reality for employment in the province of Ontario.

1650

By their own admission in this budget, they over-predicted last year that they would create 67,000 more jobs. Of course, those jobs were not realized. It's right here in the budget, and yet you're going to bring in a tax credit cut for under \$10 million, which is going to undermine an economic boost for Toronto, for the GTA and for other communities that really are fostering this new creative industry.

So what's at stake? Ontario right now "is a centre for global film and television—in part because of its skilled labour, its production infrastructure, its post-production and VFX capacity," and, quite honestly, "Ontario entrepreneurs who run the companies that make it all happen." This has taken 10 years to rebuild.

"Other jurisdictions around the world, when implementing changes to tax credits, have 'grandfathered' productions already committed to the jurisdiction prior to the announcement. It is a common sense tax policy to make sure productions don't have the rug pulled out from underneath them." They go on to say that they are at a complete loss as to how Ontario would think otherwise.

"The damage is already being done to industry trust in Ontario as a place that can be relied upon when it comes to investing in productive capacity. The longer Ontario waits to grandfather the recent cuts, the worse it will get; the destabilization could last for years."

What's really astounding is that FilmOntario was meeting with this government, was coming to the table and was making suggestions and trying to be part of the conversation about what role they could play. Of course, they never thought that the cut would be immediate, mid-production. Who does that? I tell you, it's completely irresponsible and it's going to have long-term impacts across Toronto and across Ontario unless the grandfathering is honoured.

In the infrastructure piece of Bill 6, it goes on to say that the government should take a long-term view. Well, there are some communities that have no choice but to take a long-term view. If you think about us in Kitchener-Waterloo, we have been living this two-way, all-day GO process—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Here we go again. Here goes the mythology.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** No, it's not mythology, because I have you on the record, and I'm going to put it on the record right now.

Yesterday, actually, the member from Kitchener Centre went on to say, "Why does it take 10 years? Well,

we're addressing grade separation, station modifications, track and signal additions and all the other important work that's necessary to meet this goal. There's a whole team of engineers working" on it.

Well, I would have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when the promise was made of two-way, all-day GO every 15 minutes on electrified rails, this government knew that this was already going on. So they stood on the platform and they made a promise that they knew they couldn't keep.

So of course we have no choice but to take a long-term view because it just went from four trains in the morning coming from KW to Toronto—but of course no trains going from Toronto to KW. And that's supposed to be in two years, but that's not the promise that was made by the Minister of Transportation.

So I'm just going to remind the minister of what's on the record prior to the election. The Minister of Transportation at the time was Mr. Murray. He said that "the high-speed rail link is the third step in a three-step process.... The first step, already announced by the Liberals, is to increase GO trains between Kitchener and Toronto to four trains each way per day by 2016." This is a CBC news production from May 27. "The second step is to move to two-way, all-day GO service within five years, according to Murray, and then complete a high-speed link in 10 years."

With all due respect, this was not the Minister of Transportation, but this was a Liberal promise. It was part of their platform—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** The platform said 10 years.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a matter of public record. I can see that it's frustrating.

But I can tell you what's not going to change: Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, isn't going to make a Liberal government, pre-election or post-election, keep this promise. There's no legislation that I've ever seen thus far that can ensure that Liberals will keep their promises.

Aside from the language about "we're working on it," I just want to point out that the minister of the day at the time went on to say that one of the things that—actually, there was a lot of doubt. I should be fair in this. When the promises were made on the platform in Kitchener about this two-way, all-day, every 15 minutes, electrified rail, and a bullet train—I'm not even going to talk about the bullet train, because I think we all know how to classify the bullet train promise.

But at the time, the experts said—and this expert, actually, is Mr. Munro. He said, "The fact that they have not released the background paper on the grounds of commercial confidentiality, well wait a minute, you're talking about spending \$3 billion of public money and you're not prepared to give us the report that you're justifying this with? Can you say 'gas plant'?"

"One of the first things we want to do if we're re-elected is get those studies out there," said the Minister of Transportation at the time.

I think the key part of the sentence is "re-elected," because this was part of their election promise.

But Munro questioned Murray's assertion that the high-speed rail line could make money, because this is the big thing about transit infrastructure: It is very rarely self-sustaining; it usually is very heavily subsidized. But the value in infrastructure investment, like, perhaps, a two-way, all-day GO service every 15 minutes on an electrified rail, means it's the connectivity which actually generates the investment because it creates one cluster to another cluster.

The community of Kitchener–Waterloo has made such a compelling business case for this investment. They even commissioned their own study and they costed it out at \$396 million.

But the plan, as it stands right now, for the record, does not involve getting the 10,000 people from Toronto to Kitchener–Waterloo; it does not happen. So Google continues to bus these people, this talent, because they have investment in the people and they want to make sure those people are safe; they want to make sure those people can get to work. This government should care about those people getting to work because those people pay taxes and they generate revenue for the province of Ontario.

So here we are: We have an infrastructure plan for the province, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, which asks us to take a long-term view. Again, many communities—my own community; Cambridge, obviously, would be another community—are waiting for GO service as well and they've made a very compelling case. And Niagara has made a very compelling case for their ridership.

The longer you wait, though—and this is the key piece. The longer you wait, you lose the ridership. People are like me and they're getting on the 401 at 4:15 in the morning, and that's late. The intensity on the 401 in the morning coming into Toronto is pretty profound. So we have some serious concerns, obviously, about that.

And actually, yesterday, it was interesting: The CEO of BlackBerry—his name is John Chen—talked about talent retention and how the connectivity piece is so key, because we invest in our youth. They acquire these wonderful skills to work, perhaps, in the film industry, although I've just outlined why I have some serious concerns about that, and they go elsewhere. They go down to Silicon Valley because they want the jobs. So we invest in them and then we drop the ball because we can't somehow figure out how to actually follow through on a long-standing promise of two-way, all-day GO service back and forth to Toronto.

I did think it was really important—the economic development minister referenced the Ed Clark report. Nowhere in Bill 6 would you—this new way of making decisions here at Queen's Park, of contracting out opinions that you need to justify moving ahead with the sale of a strategic public asset like Hydro One, this legislation wouldn't do anything to prevent that, especially a pro bono offer of help, which actually cost the people of this province \$7 million.



We, of course, support the long-term view, and that decision-makers should take into account the needs of Ontarians by being mindful of demographic and economic trends in Ontario. We're really hopeful that this government recognizes that cutting the tax credits for the Ontario film industry and digital media is a negative return, for instance, and the apprenticeships program in the budget—it's a \$55-million reduction in the tax credit for apprenticeships. It's right here in the budget. That's going to hurt youth employment, because without those partnerships with the private sector, which we have always been supportive of, especially when it's a training opportunity for youth, that slams the door in their face.

1700

I think we can all agree that Ontario has the highest youth unemployment in the country. We can't afford to miss these opportunities to ensure that they reach their potential.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I always welcome the opportunity—and I've had a number of opportunities this week alone—to be here in the chamber in the afternoon on the topic of the budget, relating specifically, in my case, to transit and transportation infrastructure.

I've had a number of occasions to listen to the member from Kitchener, who has just spoken with respect to—the terminology I used the other day—the convenient mythology not just of the NDP caucus, that third-place party, but also of this member in particular. I'm not quite sure that I can find a better, more appropriate or more accurate way to describe the spin that has emanated from that particular member today and still fall within the bounds of what is parliamentary language.

What I think is most important for the people who are watching at home, particularly those from the Kitchener-Waterloo region, is for everyone to remember that on the one hand, this member sees fit on a daily basis to stand here and to castigate the alternate financing and procurement process that we use for building infrastructure in this province, and to slam Infrastructure Ontario, which has a world-leading reputation for delivering on large-scale infrastructure projects; and yet, on the other hand, that member has no hesitation whatsoever to show up in her community for the photo op when we use an IO-inspired design-build-finance-and-maintain process to deliver on an LRT that is very popular in her community.

On the one hand, that member rejects not once, but twice, our budget—last May, last summer—which includes the funding to deliver those transit investments, like two-way, all-day GO for her community; then she stands here in the House after her vote, which attempted to sideline our desire to move the province forward with infrastructure, and she has the temerity to say in this Legislature, “Why aren't you building more infrastructure?”

You can't have it both ways; it's a shame she keeps trying to.

**The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** We talk about this particular bill. The minister wants to develop a long-term infrastructure plan for over 10 years, and I'm thinking, well, okay, 10 years; I believe it's a \$130-billion infrastructure plan, so \$13 billion a year. If you do the math, my question is, where are they going to get the money? Where is it coming from? Oh yes, wait a minute. That infrastructure is actually for the Toronto area for the most part, but it's going to be paid for by those of us who represent rural ridings—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Well, do you know what? We have to take a look at that.

Here's the thing that I really doubt is going to happen. I really doubt this is going to happen because this government has created so much red tape that they're going to get caught up in their own red tape—unless, of course, they want to do things like change laws or amend certain bills so that they can kind of bypass and walk right through things.

I will say this, Speaker: My riding of Chatham-Kent has a multi-million dollar infrastructure deficit. Specifically, it's home to a large number of roads and bridges. They may not know this here, but Chatham-Kent by itself is home to about 850 bridge or culvert structures greater than three metres in span length. The municipality is also home to some 19,000 smaller culverts. We've got a real issue in Chatham-Kent. Thanks to this government, we have lost a lot of business and industry. We have high unemployment, we have zero tax base, and now the people—our transit is being able to cross a culvert without the danger of falling through.

We need a lot of work done in this province. Our member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and the gas tax—guess what? A lot of that money doesn't come our way. Yes, we do have small transit, but we need to do better. This government needs to do better, and if they don't do better, then it will just be for Toronto and nobody else.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Oh, my goodness, Speaker. Things are getting kind of hot and heavy here.

I want to say, first of all, to the Minister of Transportation, I don't think the member for Kitchener-Waterloo is just making this up out of thin air.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Oh, yes, she is.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** No, because I can tell you, I am looking at information on CBC News; it's on Google—you know, the Google Alerts. I can certainly send that to you.

I've experienced an announcement in London, Ontario, where I live—my riding is London-Fanshawe—and this was actually reported back in December 2014, so that's six months after the election, because we had the election in June. The Liberals hired a third-party consultant, and it was known that this consultant was rushed; the study was rushed. It was done in two weeks, and there was documentation obtained by CBC. So the documentation was obtained by CBC—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Through an FOI.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Well, regardless—we have to have transparency and accountability. If you want to give us the documents without FOI, we will accept them. That's not a problem.

However, we had to do the—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You know better than that.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I get that it might be a little bit personal for you, but we have to speak out about it.

Absolutely, what community wouldn't want high-speed rail? Actually, when the minister came to London to announce this high-speed rail, one of my staff was just tickled pink, and she said, "Oh, my gosh, my real estate property is going to go up." Imagine the transportation coming from Toronto to London and London to Toronto.

But besides that, I just want to point out to the minister that the member from Kitchener–Waterloo is not spinning it; she has the facts. We can certainly send them to you, without an FOI. And I have the facts here too. The previous minister said it would cost as low as \$10 to get from London to Toronto on high-speed rail in 71 minutes. I would just like to see that information. I'd like to see the actual documentation, the proof.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** It's an honour to rise and address Bill 6, the proposed infrastructure bill for jobs and prosperity.

I find it quite ironic that when I talk to all of my friends from all three provincial parties, they know about the new infrastructure, and they're glad to see it coming forward. Time is of the essence. It should be commenced, and we're doing everything in our power to try to make that happen.

The past MPP from Oshawa, a dear friend of mine—I won't give his name; it's inappropriate to say that in this House, but I will tell you that he has proclaimed actively for the last year and a half that the Highway 407 East extension from Ajax–Pickering through to Highway 115 is the greatest financial job creation motivator that Durham region has ever seen. Quite frankly, a member of regional council—the chair, Roger Anderson—and his council agree with that. They all know how necessary it is, what it's going to do, how it's going to speed up traffic, how it's going to be a job creator—it's going to do all those things.

The minister was good enough to just recently commence with 407 East, phase 2. That process is well under way now, and if you drive out to the country, you just won't believe it. Things are happening. Jobs are going to be created from all this.

I can also mention that in addition to that, there's Highway 418, which is the north-south boundary, and that's a godsend. That's going to link the two major arteries, 407 East and 401, just prior to getting to Clarington. When I talk about Clarington, I'll make my

good friend from Clarington happy in that GO trains have to be in there; the GO trains have to get as far as Clarington.

On the street in Ajax and Pickering, in my area, people want the jobs. They're anxious. They just can't wait. I'm looking forward to that day as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo, two minutes.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thank you, everyone, for the comments. Obviously, I'm going to direct my comments to the Minister of Transportation. I had to show up at the ION photo op because I had to make sure you were still going to hold to the \$300 million that you invested. Originally you started at \$600 million, so there was a considerable reduction in that.

1710

I'm happy that the minister raised the AFP model because it was actually not me who raised the red flag, it was the Auditor General, an independent officer of this Legislature. When she went through those 74 infrastructure projects, she could find no empirical evidence to justify going towards the AFP model, and that actually cost \$6.5 billion in additional financing. Infrastructure Ontario cannot afford to be borrowing money for infrastructure at credit card rates. Common sense would prevail.

This legislation, Bill 6, is not going to lend that sort of common sense lens to these decisions. Fortunately, though, Infrastructure Ontario has come to public accounts. They are reviewing their processes and they're going to come back—and that's the important part about the oversight, Mr. Speaker.

On the two-way, all-day GO, every 15 minutes within two, four, five or now 10 years, I think people understand the service level because they're down to 130 passengers in the morning. The train takes over two hours to get from KW to Toronto. It doesn't matter how much the respective members spin it, they're living the broken promises on transit in this province, and no piece of legislation is going to change that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to speak a little bit this afternoon. Of course, I'll be sharing my time this afternoon with the member from Davenport and the member from Halton, two wonderful colleagues who really and truly, like everyone else on this enlightened side of the House, understand the importance of making sure that you have an ambitious plan to invest in building the province up. I'm happy to share my time with those members this afternoon.

Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, is an extremely important piece of legislation and I will talk at length in a couple of moments with respect to why it's such an important piece of legislation. But somewhat tied into the importance of Bill 6 is this discussion that we've just had regarding some of the comments, some of the debate that's been added by members from the NDP caucus.



It's interesting to me because of course I've now had two or three occasions this week alone to talk about the member from Kitchener–Waterloo who, of course, seems to have quite the fascination with Liberal government photo ops, even though she seeks to try to torque things when she's here in this chamber. I understand that it looks good for the householder locally when you show up for the photos, but that means you have to be frank and reasonable with your broader support for making sure that we invest.

But I also found it interesting that the member from London–Fanshawe decided to chime in this afternoon and take up the torch, take up that baton left in this particular relay race, I suppose, from the member from Kitchener, and talk about whether or not we really do have the plans.

Again, what I find fascinating is that not that many weeks or months after I became Minister of Transportation last year, I was down in London with the Deputy Premier, who has so ably represented her community for so long, and we announced significant infrastructure upgrades in some of the Highway 401 interchanges in that community. I was fairly new on the job at that time as Minister of Transportation, but, again, at that time, the member from London–Fanshawe—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order: the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I do not believe that we have a quorum in the House this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The table will check.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

*The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** A quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As I was saying, the member from London–Fanshawe, who spoke this afternoon, on that particular day when I was in London to announce the ongoing interchange upgrades that the province is making as the result of the infrastructure investments that are part of our plan—that member, the member from London–Fanshawe, exactly like the member from Kitchener–Waterloo from the NDP caucus, stands here in the House and suggests that we aren't investing in infrastructure. But when we do invest in infrastructure in their communities—in Kitchener–Waterloo and in London—they have no hesitation to show up for the celebration. It makes me really and truly believe that when you think of the acronym NDP, it kind of stands for “never done with the photo-ops.” I think that's unfortunate. I think it's truly unfortunate.

Here in this government, under the leadership of this Premier and the minister responsible for economic development, employment and infrastructure, we believe passionately in making sure that we have legislation in

place that helps lay out a long-term plan for investing in infrastructure, for building the province up, and it's what we're doing.

One of the members from the PC caucus earlier this afternoon, in speaking about the importance of infrastructure in his rural Ontario community, somehow suggested that all of the investments that we're making as a government are taking place in Toronto, in the 416. Of course, that's also, I would very respectfully suggest, a misrepresentation of the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

Over the next decade—I withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** No, you'll sit down first.

You now will stand up and withdraw.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And you can continue.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As I was saying, that member is clearly incorrect with respect to what's in the Moving Ontario Forward plan. The \$31.5 billion that's being invested over the next decade in transit, transportation and other critical forms of infrastructure right across the province of Ontario includes approximately \$16 billion for the greater Toronto and—Speaker—Hamilton area and it includes roughly \$15 billion for communities that fall outside the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

I know it's difficult for a Conservative to accept, but when we came up with the formula to divide how we're making these investments, we used an organization that's known as Statistics Canada. I understand: When you stand shoulder to shoulder with our Prime Minister, who has literally eradicated the work of the census and all the great statistical work that has occurred in Canada since Confederation practically, I know it's hard to accept that, in fact, we've used Statistics Canada data to decide how we're going to make these investments.

The other day, when I spoke with respect to the budget and I talked about infrastructure as it relates to the budget, I didn't have the opportunity to discuss the importance of making sure that you really do have an infrastructure plan generally in the province, but also as it relates to my own community.

I ran out of time the other day, and I want to spend what's left of my time to talk about the infrastructure investments that are at the very heart of not only Bill 6 but our government's plan to move the province forward and to improve quality of life for people and to build up the economy and to give all of us a more prosperous future, and what that means for the people who live in York region, and specifically for people in my community.

Since 2012, people in this Legislature will know that I have been a strong champion for making sure that three crucial infrastructure investments continue to flow into York region to specifically benefit my community. One of them is the Highway 427 extension. That is an extension of roughly seven kilometres, which will take Highway 427 from where it currently ends, around Highway 7 in the western part of my community, and

extend it northbound, again, by about seven kilometres, up to Major Mackenzie Drive.

The really fascinating thing for me now is that as the Minister of Transportation as well as the MPP for Vaughan, I'm extremely proud that it's me and my ministry and the rest of the folks on this side of the House who have direct responsibility for making sure that we deliver that project, and we surely will.

The other project that's really important, of course, is the combined public transit investments. There are actually three I want to highlight that benefit Vaughan and benefit all of York and, frankly, in some cases benefit wonderful communities like Barrie as well. Those three things are what we're doing on the Barrie line as it relates to GO regional express rail. I've talked about GO RER—regional express rail—a fair bit here in this chamber over the last number of weeks.

What that means for people who live in Maple, Kleinburg and Woodbridge—three wonderful communities that I have the privilege of representing here in this chamber—is that they will have, over the next decade, two-way, all-day GO service, electrified, at up to 15-minute intervals, running north and south all day long. That's something that is extremely important for people in my community, a high-growth community if there ever was one. In addition to that: the Liberal provincial government's \$1.4-billion investment in York region's Viva BRT system.

When I think about our infrastructure plan and I think about this budget and I think about Bill 6 and I think about the ambitious plan our Premier and our government have, I actually think of my seven-year-old daughter. This is the context that I put it in. I live somewhere in the neighbourhood of Islington and Highway 7. My seven-year-old daughter, in 10 years, when she's 17, when she has completed high school and she's contemplating what her future might look like and she wants to connect to other parts of this region or, frankly, even other parts of this province, will have the opportunity, because of our \$1.4-billion investment in Viva BRT, to spend a little bit of time leaving our home, walking down to Highway 7—because we only live about a kilometre north of Highway 7—getting on a dedicated bus running along Highway 7 taking her over to the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension, which is another project this government has roughly \$870 million invested in.

1720

It is all about connectivity. It is all about building an integrated transit network here in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, and it's also about making sure, whether it's by virtue of the investments that we are making in highways in the north, re-establishing a stand-alone Connecting Link fund, as we have done, investing in natural gas, investing in all other forms—bridges, roads etc.—

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** All other forms? Trains?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Trains as well, of course. Perhaps the member from Nipissing is unaware, as he is unaware of so many other things, that the GO train network in its very name has the word “train.”

Beyond that, it's important for us to make sure Bill 6 passes. Bill 6 is a companion piece to the investments that are contained in budget 2015, as they were in budget 2014, as they were in budget 2013—a very ambitious plan across all sectors to invest \$130 billion over the next decade in infrastructure from corner to corner to corner to corner of this province: to the north, to the southwest, to the east, to all forums, to all aspects of this province.

I would only say that in all of the criticisms that I've heard in my two years or so in this chamber as an MPP representing Vaughan, whether I'm talking about the misguided attempts from the official opposition, the Conservative members, or those coming from the third party, the NDP, what's most troubling to me and to the people I represent and the people we all represent on this side of the House is that repeatedly on the left hand or the right hand, depending on where they start from, they want to slam whether or not we really and truly are building up the province, whether or not we really are making the investments, whether we're doing it fast enough. On the other hand, on every single occasion when they have the chance to stand with us, to stand up for Ontario and to support their own communities, for the sake of crass, short-sighted political interests, they choose not to. It's a shame.

We're going to keep building the province up. Let's pass this bill. Let's move forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? Oh, you're splitting your time. The member for Davenport.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It really, truly is a privilege to speak on Bill 6 this afternoon, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. It is such a pleasure to hear the Minister of Transportation speak with such passion and such dedication about what our government is doing to invest in infrastructure. I wanted to congratulate him for all the great work that he is doing to build modern infrastructure, which is part of our government's plan to continue growing the economy and create jobs. That is why we are investing over \$130 billion in public infrastructure over the next 10 years.

Investing in infrastructure makes perfect economic sense. In fact, an April 2013 report from the Conference Board of Canada found that each dollar invested in public infrastructure in Ontario raises gross domestic product by \$1.14 in the near term. In addition, our own studies show that the returns on this dollar grow to \$3.10 in the long term, while supporting jobs and facilitating private investment.

Moreover, our \$130-billion investment builds much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province and will be supporting over 110,000 jobs annually. If passed and proclaimed, this bill would require our government and future governments to regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans. This will ensure that all governments recognize the importance of long-term planning.

The Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act is part of our plan to continue building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. The proposed legislation would



increase the opportunities for apprenticeships for a wide variety of trades. This bill represents our government's priorities of building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure and creating a dynamic business climate.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a bit of time now discussing the important topic of gridlock and the importance of investment to the GTHA's infrastructure.

The need for infrastructure investment is nowhere more evident than in the GTHA. Investing in infrastructure in the GTHA is an absolute priority and necessity for our province to succeed. Gridlock is choking our growth potential. The average daily commute time for residents in Ontario is nearly 66 minutes, and gridlock costs our economy up to \$11 billion per year in the GTHA alone. Our government is investing significantly to address gridlock, and I'm happy that constituents of my riding of Davenport are direct beneficiaries of these investments.

The Union Pearson Express, which begins service on June 6, represents a component to our government's commitment to expanding infrastructure in Toronto. This dedicated rail link will finally connect Canada's two busiest transportation hubs, Union Station and Toronto Pearson International Airport. By 2020, Metrolinx expects the UP Express to attract approximately 2.5 million riders annually.

The Eglinton Crosstown LRT, which has two stations in Davenport, at Eglinton and Caledonia, and at Eglinton and Dufferin, is another example of our government building Ontario up. This project, expected to be completed by 2020, represents the largest transit expansion in Toronto's history. In fact, on April 17 the tunnel boring machines tunneling from Black Creek reached their destination point at the Allen Road. Hundreds of people watched as, late at night, the tunnel boring machines were lifted and transported to the east side of the Allen.

I'm happy that the 2015 Ontario budget continues the great work to increase transportation options for Ontarians, specifically my constituents of Davenport.

One particular plan which will benefit Davenport residents is our government's regional express rail plan, the RER plan. It will completely transform public transportation in Toronto by electrifying all GO corridors and running trains all day, two ways, up to every 15 minutes. RER will deliver electrified service at about 15-minute frequency across two GO lines which cross through Davenport: the Kitchener corridor, including the UP Express, and the Barrie corridor. This network will also be the foundation for the SmartTrack proposal in the city of Toronto.

I'm happy that our government is doing important work to improve long-term infrastructure planning. Bill 6 was introduced in July 2014, and it outlines a series of mechanisms to encourage principled, evidence-based and strategic long-term infrastructure planning. In addition, it includes measures intended to support job creation and training opportunities, economic growth and protection of the environment.

The key components of this legislation are as follows: The bill requires that the government and the broader public sector consider specific principles when making infrastructure decisions; for example, planning being done on a long-term basis and the need for alignment with demographic-economic trends. It also includes a requirement that the Minister of Infrastructure table a long-term infrastructure plan in the Legislature, covering at least 10 years. It would be required that a certain number of apprentices be involved in the construction of provincial infrastructure assets, as prescribed by regulation.

I'm happy to have been given the opportunity to speak here this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Halton.

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise and speak today in support of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. I'm pleased to also add my comments to my colleagues the Minister of Transportation, who spoke so passionately, and also the MPP for Davenport, who also spoke so passionately about this very, very important bill.

This is a vital bill. Why? Because Ontario's new 10-year economic plan includes over \$130 billion in public infrastructure investments. These are important vital investments that will affect Ontarians' lives every day in so many different ways. What this will do is build our province up. It will essentially result in support of over 110,000 jobs annually and will build much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province. This is also the largest investment in infrastructure in our province's history, so we've got to get it right.

If passed and proclaimed, the proposed legislation would build on past work and ensure that current and future governments regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans and continue to improve how the province prioritizes and addresses infrastructure needs. What does this mean? What this means is that we will have a plan. We will have a plan when it comes to how those dollars are spent. We will have a plan when it comes to building our roads, building our bridges, building our hospitals, building our schools and building our transit. We have to look beyond one-off projects and we have to plan for the future.

1730

Let me talk a little bit about my own riding of Halton. One of the things that we are proposing here is that we will have a plan that takes into account 10 years of projections, demographics, how things are going to grow and how we are going to make sure that we deliver the support and foundations that the people in our province need. In Halton, for example, the fastest-growing area in the country, take 10 years, a 10-year snapshot in my riding. Over 10 years in my riding, the town of Milton went from 30,000 people to close to 100,000 people. What did this mean? Well, it meant we needed strong infrastructure. We needed schools built, we needed roads built, we needed public transportation and we needed hospitals. You cannot build those things without plan-

ning. They don't happen overnight. It takes years to plan and build a hospital. It takes years to plan and build schools. You have to take into account where the growth is happening and where it makes sense for us to build these things.

For example, when it comes to health the people in my riding are going to have access to three very state-of-the-art facilities: a major hospital now being built in Oakville; also, an extension, an expansion in Milton; and the same thing happening at Joseph Brant, in Burlington. These three pieces need to work together to fulfill the needs of the people in my riding, and so planning is extremely important.

This bill ensures that we will have a plan, that we will have a vision and that we will have done our homework when it comes to spending taxpayers' money. That's what they want. They want the homework done. This is the right thing to do when it comes to our roads, bridges and infrastructure, and the right thing to do for our children and our future.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** It's almost surprising that we need a bill like this. You would think that planning for infrastructure would be the first thing that anybody would do before they plan any kind of construction projects or any kind of long-term work in the province for the things that we have to do, such as building highways, subways, GO trains etc. However, I guess the nature of government is such that if you don't have a plan that's legislated, and when you have a government in place doing things and you allow room for corruption, then corruption will happen. On that basis, I guess we do need to have what would seem like an unnecessary piece of legislation, because of our government.

We have a \$130-billion plan for 10 years to build infrastructure—mainly highways, subways and things of that nature—and yet we're just missing the \$130 billion. Really, what we need isn't a plan on how we're going to do things and create jobs and tender and all that good stuff, we need a financial plan as to where the money's going to come from. Because here we have a group that wants to spend \$13 billion a year for the next 10 years and they just don't have the money.

So they've come up with this idea since the election—since they didn't campaign on it—that we should sell Hydro, which used to be the idea that terrible people like those in my party would come up with, and now that party thinks it's a good idea. It's a good idea, except they're doing it in the wrong way. They're going to sell off 60% of it after they give shares to unions for the next 12 and 15 years, which means even less money for the public to realize. Part of that money is going to go to pay off debt and that will look after part of the infrastructure spending for this year. And what do we do for next year? Do we sell Hydro again? I don't think so. We can only sell it once.

So we need a financial plan—that's what's missing here—because these people have wasted too much of our money.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to speak in this House, especially on Bill 6, a plan to make 10-year plans.

To really look at how a government performs, let's look at their plans going back 10 years, specifically five years ago when they laid out their plan and their contracts on how to clean the roads from snow. In the auditor's report: "In addition, the ministry procured private sector contractors primarily on the basis of the lowest price bid, without properly ensuring that the contractors chosen were fully equipped to provide effective ... services. Even though ministry staff, including engineers, raised serious concerns," they went ahead.

Speaker, that was part of the plan. They were willing to risk people across the province. That is part of the plan.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Davenport.

Stop the clock.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the member opposite is not speaking to the bill. Perhaps he can speak to what's at hand right now.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If he gets off-base, I will certainly let him know. Thanks for the comment.

Continue.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm speaking in response to the Minister of Transportation, who mentioned photo-ops—on several opportunities, he mentioned photo-ops. Here are a few old photos. Maybe he would like some of our photos, because when we started a northern road report, we asked people to send us photos: photos of roads that had this much snow—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down. When I stand, you sit; you know what the rule is. Thanks very much.

I'm not quite sure that photos of you are what we're talking about here.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Don't shake your head. I would suggest you get back to the bill. Thank you.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Respectfully, Speaker, I was talking about photos of the roads that were closed for hours on end waiting for a snowplow. I've got a beautiful photo of one of those overhead road boards where they have, "The 401 is moving well." I've got one where I pull out on the highway. In the middle of November, it said, "Give motorcycles room"—in northern Ontario in November. Is that also part of the plan?

Let's be real and make sure our roads are safe.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Speaker, thank you very much. I want to thank those who have spoken on this bill on infrastructure. I always go back to where we began on this, back to 2003. When we were first elected in 2003, and I've mentioned this before in the House, we actually



identified three deficits in the province of Ontario when we came into government.

We identified a services deficit. We've done a fair bit to address that, I would say, by hiring 5,600 more doctors, 24,000 more nurses, opening up nurse practitioner clinics, and vastly reducing the number of people who no longer have access to a primary care provider in the province of Ontario.

We also identified a financial deficit. You'll remember—we hear the Conservatives talk often about what wonderful stewards they are of the finances of the province. When we came in in 2003, during very robust economic times in Ontario, primarily on the back of a very robust economy in the US and a 63-cent dollar or a 70-cent dollar, they still left with us a \$8.5-billion financial deficit that was really an \$8.5-billion structural deficit because they'd just sold the 407 for \$3 billion.

So they really left with us with an \$8.5-billion structural deficit when the economy of the province of Ontario was red hot. No recession going on, but the financial stewards across the way still found the capacity to leave the people of the province of Ontario with an \$8.5-billion financial deficit. If you're not sure about that, just go back and check the Toronto Star headline in 2003. Toronto Star headline—very bold, very clear.

But the point is, we have massively been investing in infrastructure—the third deficit that we identified in 2003—massively investing. This bill is not the beginning of it; this is the continuation of it. Since 2003, we've been making massive investments. My community and home riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan has been a huge beneficiary of investments in roads, bridges and mass transit infrastructure. Just see the 1,200 more people who are working at the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay today who weren't there in 2003.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? One more. Who's up? Going once. Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. I hear the comments about the deficit when this government came in, because I was involved with municipal government. I remember that this government in 2003-04—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Stop the clock. You guys were all concerned about the member not sticking to the agenda. While our favourite minister was up, you were all screaming. I couldn't even hear him, and he's on your side. Isn't that special? So I would suggest we cut back the decibel level in here real quick, or I'll be cutting real quick.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. This government spent \$3 billion in the last week of March of unfunded liabilities because they went around handing out cheques. I remember our local member said, "We're so busy handing out cheques we're going to have to let it go into April because we just can't do it, but you know that money is going to count for last year's budget." Wasn't that big of them? They did that. Plus, I don't

know what they spent between October and the last week of March, but it's probably a lot more than \$3 billion. That was all about this message they have about inheriting a deficit. That's how transparency started under this government. It was just a plan where they would tell the people one thing, promise another, do something else and then blame somebody else.

The Globe and Mail probably has a little bit more credibility than some of the papers they quote. They talked about how the Ernie Eves government actually had a balanced budget but the trickery of this government made them put it on the books by taking another credit from the federal government a year later. That's not the norm, the way the accounting works in this province. That's just typical.

We've heard promise after promise. We heard a Premier who came in—a candidate who signed something saying, "I will never raise taxes." The first thing they did was the health tax. In the next election: "I will not raise taxes." Then the GST. We also heard, "No carbon tax." The carbon tax is on the table.

This is a record that should be shameful in this province. That's not the way we've grown up. There's integrity, but it's lacking in some of these governments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Transportation has two minutes. And be nice to the Speaker.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that.

I want to begin by thanking the members from Davenport and Halton for their eloquence this afternoon and for their commitment to actually building the province up—and of course, the member from Carleton—Mississippi Mills; the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane; my good friend and colleague the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry; and the final speaker, the member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

Really quickly, I'll mention, as a quick footnote to what the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry was saying, that as a result of us inadvertently forgetting the enormous download, the burden that was placed by the former Conservative government on municipalities, that deficit the Minister of Natural Resources talked about was actually hovering probably closer to \$11 billion or \$12 billion.

I say this in the interests of trying to help my friends across the way in the PC and NDP caucuses: I just want to let you know that, in all sincerity, the people watching at home from your communities, from time to time, I'm sure, would be gratified if you would stand with us when we go forward with a plan as a result of this legislation, or we build transit, or we build transportation infrastructure, or we extend natural gas, or we build hospitals or courthouses, or we launch the environmental assessment to support high-speed rail from Toronto to Kitchener-Waterloo, to London and ultimately to Windsor, or we upgrade interchanges along the 401, or we invest in highways in northern Ontario, or we re-establish the Connecting Links Program, which almost 80 communities

across the province, including many in the north, have asked us to do—when we do all of that to benefit towns and cities and communities in every corner of Ontario, the people you represent will from time to time thank you if you stand—don't be afraid to stand with us on this stuff. Don't be afraid to stand up. In the case of the Conservatives, particularly the member from Nipissing, I say, don't be afraid to stand up to the federal Conservatives when they refuse to invest in this province. To the members of the NDP, don't be afraid to stand with us as we build this province up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed

adjourned unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Speaker, no further debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** No further debate.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1744.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac  
Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est-Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

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**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

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Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecek

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecek

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short



## **Trade development**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4143
Hon. Michael Chan .....	4143

## **Affordable housing**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4144
Hon. Ted McMeekin .....	4144

## **Lyme disease**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4144
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4144

## **Family Service Ontario**

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	4145
Hon. Helena Jaczek.....	4145

## **Priority hiring of veterans in Ontario public service**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4146
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4146

## **Visitor**

Hon. Mitzie Hunter .....	4146
--------------------------	------

## **Privatization of public assets**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4146
------------------------------------	------

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Use of digital technologies**

Mr. Michael Harris.....	4147
-------------------------	------

### **Cultural funding**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	4147
-----------------------	------

### **Teresa Vasilopoulos**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4147
------------------------	------

### **Doctor shortage**

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4147
------------------------	------

### **Sustainable Waterloo Region**

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4148
-------------------------	------

### **Earth Day**

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4148
--------------------------	------

### **Ontario economy**

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4148
-----------------------	------

### **Aurora Food Pantry**

Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4149
-------------------------	------

### **Father Cyril William Sullivan**

Ms. Harinder Malhi.....	4149
-------------------------	------

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

### **Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4149
Report adopted.....	4149

## **Visitor**

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4149
-------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Veterans Employment Act, 2015, Bill 97, Mr. Wilson**

<b>/ Loi de 2015 sur l'emploi des anciens combattants, projet de loi 97, M. Wilson</b>	
First reading agreed to.....	4150
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4150

## **MOTIONS**

### **Order of business**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4150
Motion agreed to .....	4150

### **Consideration of Bill 80**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4150
Motion agreed to .....	4150

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Taxation**

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4150
-----------------------	------

### **Lyme disease**

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	4151
-------------------------	------

### **Student safety**

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	4151
---------------------------	------

### **Hospice funding**

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4151
---------------------	------

### **Lyme disease**

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4151
-------------------------	------

### **Student safety**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4152
--------------------------------	------

### **Off-road vehicles**

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4152
------------------------	------

### **Off-road vehicles**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4152
--------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4152
-----------------------------	------

### **All-terrain vehicles**

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4153
-----------------------	------

### **Lyme disease**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4153
-------------------------------	------

### **Shale Beach**

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4153
---------------------	------

### **Hospital funding**

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4153
-----------------------	------

### **Energy policies**

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4153
------------------------	------

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### **Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015, Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prosperité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid**

Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4154
Mrs. Laura Albanese.....	4156
Ms. Soo Wong.....	4156
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4157
Mr. Wayne Gates.....	4157
Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn.....	4157
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4158
Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4158
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4159
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4161
Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4161
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4162
Mr. Wayne Gates.....	4162
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4163
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4163
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4166
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	4166
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4166
Mr. Joe Dickson.....	4167
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4167
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4167
Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4169
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4170
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	4171
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4171
Hon. Bill Mauro.....	4171
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4172
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4172
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	4173



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 6 May 2015 / Mercredi 6 mai 2015

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### 2015 Ontario budget

Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4123
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4125
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4125
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4125
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4126
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4126
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4126
Hon. David Zimmer .....	4128
Ms. Ann Hoggarth .....	4129
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	4129
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4130
Mr. Bas Balkissoon .....	4130
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4130
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4131
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4131
Debate deemed adjourned .....	4134

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4134
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4134
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4134
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4134
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4134
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4134
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4134
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4135
Hon. Helena Jacek .....	4135
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4135
Mme France Gélinas .....	4135
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4135
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4135
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4135
Mr. Joe Dickson .....	4135
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4135
Ms. Soo Wong .....	4135
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4135
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4135
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4135
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4135
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4135
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4135

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4135
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4135
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4135
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4135
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4135
Hon. David Zimmer .....	4135
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4136
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4136

### Wearing of ribbons

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4136
--------------------------	------

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Michael Harris .....	4136
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4136
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4136
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4137
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4137

### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4137
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4137

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4138
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4138

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4139
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4139
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4140

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4140
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4140

### Teachers' labour disputes

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4140
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4141

### Music industry

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4141
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4141

### Lyme disease

Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4142
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4142

### Ontario film industry

Mr. Paul Miller .....	4143
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4143

*Continued on inside back cover*

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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

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# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 7 May 2015

Jeudi 7 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 7 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 7 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

#### BUDGET DE L'ONTARIO DE 2015

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 6, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When we last debated this issue, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke had finished his speech. We are now moving into questions and comments. The member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm sure it was the most electrifying speech that the Legislature has seen in some time, because we know that the member from—where?

**Mr. John Yakubowski:** Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is always an animated debater when it comes to this Legislature.

I'm sure that he talked about what I think a lot of Ontarians are talking about with regard to this particular government budget. In the last election, we all ran and understood what we thought the issues would be coming into this particular session. I don't know about you guys, but I don't ever remember the Conservatives—the Liberals, I should say. I call the Liberals Conservatives because they're actually outflanking the Conservatives on the right, but that's a whole other issue.

I don't ever remember the Liberals running in the last election saying, "Vote for me and I'm going to privatize your hydro system." I don't ever remember Kathleen Wynne going to any political event or any media event and saying that she was going to privatize hydro. She talked about unlocking the assets of some things, but she never talked about privatizing hydro.

Nobody thought in a million years that the Liberals, who said they were progressive, would do what ultimately not even Mike Harris or Ernie Eves did, because, quite frankly, even they understood it was a very bad idea.

But the Liberals, who as always run on the left when they're running for election and are all the way on the right now that they're in government, have decided they are going to privatize Hydro One. It's not bad enough

that our electricity price has gone up by 320% since the Liberals have taken office, mostly because of their failed policies when it comes to privatization on the generation side with all of this private power. They're not happy that we had a 320% increase in electricity; they're not happy that we're going to get another 30% increase over the next couple of years. They want to drive it up even more. What in Sam Hill's name are these Liberals up to when it comes to privatizing hydro?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm very pleased to follow the member from Timmins–James Bay and speak in support of the proposed budget. I want to remind the member opposite that in the proposed budget, we are making a commitment to the largest infrastructure investment in the province's history, more than \$130 billion over 10 years in dedicated funds for Moving Ontario Forward.

Every dollar that we receive from part of the ownership of Hydro One will be placed in the Trillium Trust—that the member opposite does not want to talk about. It's being dedicated to roads, transit and bridges under Moving Ontario Forward.

Every region, every riding in our community, has a bridge. I know, in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, right now as we speak, we are improving the 401 and Victoria Park. We just finished the improvement of Warden and the 401. I know the members opposite will be travelling along the 401, and there are bridges in every riding in this province. So, as outlined in the 2014 budget, Moving Ontario Forward, it is a priority of this government to invest in public transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure in Ontario. The member opposite somehow forgot how many hospitals we have built and how many universities and colleges we have improved. Somehow they have this selective memory loss.

The other piece here is that they don't have to say that we're not doing it. They have evidence to prove that we've been doing it. Across Ontario, we are improving the infrastructure because for the last 25 years we haven't done any improvements, resulting in congestion. I remember listening yesterday to my colleague from Etobicoke, in this particular debate, talking about how much financial cost is due to congestion, but he did not even talk about the health care costs.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'll be speaking much later and more in depth on the budget, but I just want to mention about what budgeting means. I think the families at home



really understand what it means to balance the home budget and to prioritize their expenditures.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Would they sell the furniture to pay the hydro bill?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** That's exactly what I was going to say.

I was just going to say that, when they want to invest in their home's assets, perhaps renovate their house—they always say an up-to-date kitchen or washroom can add value to a house. The fact is, they're not going and maxing out their credit cards, putting on a second mortgage—I certainly hope—just to renovate their kitchen and then calling it an investment, because then we all understand that they have to pay interest upon interest and they can't dig themselves out of the hole.

We do see people retiring with debt. That's part of the problem with retirement income: It's not just the actual income from a pension, it's also the debt that people are carrying. We have to set an example, as leaders in our communities and leaders here in the Legislature. We have to show the public that we do understand what investment means: It means that you put away money in good times, and then you have it to invest to do job creation and invest in infrastructure in bad times.

I think we need to focus on prioritizing. We need to focus on finding those real efficiencies, not just talking about them. We can't just keep creating new government bureaucracies every time we have a new government program. We have to look at the government bureaucracies and programs that maybe don't need as much staff because of computerization or because of off-loading to other administrators like the LHINs.

Thank you for allowing me to just focus on the importance of the big picture of what it means to budget and what it means to actually invest.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It's always nice to rise again to talk about the budget. I talked a little bit yesterday about the tourist sector in Niagara Falls, where I got a call from the hotel owners. Now, think about this: The hotel owners are calling me. Their hydro has gone up twice as much, from 8 cents to 16 cents during peak times. So they said to me, "Well, here's the problem we have: We can't shut the lights off. We have 12 million people coming to Niagara Falls." They start coming really in May until September, maybe October, and then it kind of spreads out over the winter months even though they still come. He said, "What are we going to do? Do we have to pass on the cost of hydro to people coming to visit Niagara Falls?" What are you thinking here? So now what do you do? You make this thing—we're going to sell Hydro. We all know hydro is going to go up. It makes absolutely no sense.

What it is, it's 3%. Now, if you take a look at 3% of the total cost of your infrastructure over a period of 10 years—and I'm not sure the government will be here in 10 years, but that's a whole other debate for another day. What do we do? We're getting \$387 million in profit

from Hydro One this year. That works out to almost \$4 billion that you're going to get over 10 years.

**0910**

What have we got from that over the last number of years? We got money that we used for what? The Liberal Party should listen to this: Over the last number of years, from the profits from that, we spent that money in health care, we spent that money in transportation and we spent that money in education. If we continue to do that, we wouldn't have to force teachers out on strike today. You could have reinvested in schools. It makes absolutely no sense.

I'm going to finish my last 20 seconds on selling the GM shares. It makes absolutely no sense. We need to be at the table. At General Motors, the workers there are doing their job. Their productivity is high, they're highly skilled, our dollar is down—82 cents, although it should be around 78 cents—and in 2009, we—I'm done? Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank the members from Timmins–James Bay, Scarborough–Agincourt, Thornhill and Niagara Falls for their comments.

I want to touch briefly—I wish I had a lot of time; I wish I had a week—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** So do we.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —but I do want to touch briefly on the comments by the member from Scarborough–Agincourt. We hear over and over again how this government is saying, "But we're investing in infrastructure—\$130 billion." You'd think they were the first government in history to invest in infrastructure. But you know what, Speaker? If they hadn't messed it up so badly over the last 12 years, they wouldn't have to trade away the family inheritance in order to pay for infrastructure. But that's what they've had to do because they have mismanaged it so badly—

**Ms. Soo Wong:** What about the 407?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You're not in your seat, Soo. Go back to your seat.

They've spent the last 12 years lining the pockets of Liberal friends with their Green Energy Act fiasco, taking away money from the people of Ontario. Now their backs are against the wall, and what are they doing? They're going to sell off Hydro One. We don't even know where it's going to end, I say to my friend from Timmins–James Bay. What will be left when this government is done the fire sale? When they're done the fire sale, do they start the yard sale, and then do they start the bankruptcy auction?

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What comes next under this Liberal government for them to raise enough money to get back into investing in infrastructure after they've paid off all their Liberal friends in the energy sector? That's what has happened with the Green Energy Act. That's what has driven up those hydro bills.

I got a letter from Ottawa today—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mr. John Yakubski:** Withdraw.

I got a letter from a lady from Ottawa complaining to the Minister of Energy: 600 and some dollars to pay for hydro in a month in a small home. That is disgraceful in this province, and it is this government that has driven it through the roof.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Now that we've come to order, I would ask everybody to be a little bit civil, and if we could remove the personal attacks in some of the comments, I'd appreciate it, too.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Speaker, it is clear that the speaker from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke needs more time. I ask for unanimous consent for another 20 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I heard a no.

Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, maybe you'll say no to him, but I've got 20 minutes. Let me see what I can do.

First of all, I want to say that I don't take any particular pleasure in having time to debate this particular motion today, because what the government is doing, quite frankly, is pretty catastrophic when it comes to what this is going to mean to people back home and across this province.

Before I get to hydro, I just want to say a couple of things in response to what I've heard from the government side. This government is trying to make it look as if there's nobody in the history of the province of Ontario who has ever invested in infrastructure. They're trying to make an argument that by selling Hydro One for \$9 billion and keeping \$4 billion to build transit, they're going to do something that Ontarians had never done before, and that is to make important investments in transit. Well, I've just got to say, my God, the furthest thing from the truth is what the Liberals are putting forward, because governments in this House over the last 100 years have been investing in all kinds of infrastructure, everything from highways—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** There goes the government member who used to be the one responsible for infrastructure saying, "Not true." Did we not build bridges in this province? Did we not build highways in this province? Did we not invest in subways in this province? Did we not buy transit cars in this province? Did we not buy buses in this province? We have been investing in infrastructure for years in this province.

I would argue, is it enough? Probably not. But we have been investing in this province for years, and we've built up a system of transit and a system of roads that, quite frankly, is not a bad one. Could it be better? Absolutely, nobody argues that it can't be better. You can

always improve on what you've got. But they're trying to create this narrative that you absolutely have to sell Hydro One or else the world is going to come to an end because we're not going to be able to build any more transit.

Well, I'd just say, first of all, what have governments done in the past to pay for things like subways? I was a member of the NDP government that was building two subway lines in the city of Toronto, the crosstown Eglinton line and the line that's north by Steeles. We did that not by selling Hydro; we did that not by selling the public assets of Ontario; we did that by doing what everybody else does in the world, and that is to borrow the money over time and to pay it back. You pay it back by the increased ridership that you get from those particular lines, and you get it back from the taxes we all pay across this province.

So this argument that the only way that you can build transit in the city of Toronto is for us to sell one of our crown jewels and to sell the assets of Hydro One to the tune of 60% is a preposterous argument. Every government in the world that invests in transit, roads, inner-city rail, airports and others does so by either having the money up front, if they're lucky enough to have that money, or they borrow to do it.

What do you think towns and municipalities across Ontario have done when it comes to building arenas in their communities, when it comes to building facilities of any type in their cities or building roads? They take out a debenture; that is, to borrow money. That's how this is done.

This government argues that the only way they can build transit in the city of Toronto is by selling Hydro. It's a silly argument. In fact, if they sell Hydro, we're going to lose about \$700 million a year in revenue that we currently get from Hydro, because they pay money back to the province from the business they do in the province of Ontario. We're going to lose a big chunk of that, which means we're going to lose over time much more money than the \$4 billion they're going to get to put into transit. It's a really, really dumb argument.

I've just got to say to the government across the way that if somebody had come to me and said, "You know what? The government is going to sell Hydro," and they told me that a year ago, I would have said, "The Liberals aren't stupid enough to do that. There isn't a government in Ontario that would be stupid enough to sell Hydro." Why would you sell something that, quite frankly, is an important economic development tool in this province, as it used to be when electricity was being sold at cost before we did the privatization on the generation side? The political capital that they would have to pay as a result of selling Hydro would be enough for them to stop.

I remember; I was here when Mike Harris mused about privatizing Hydro and Ernie Eves then did some actions when he became the Premier of Ontario. They didn't just back down because CUPE brought them to court. Yes, that was a big part of it, but they backed down because the people of this province said, "Are you nuts?"



You're going to privatize what? I don't want you to privatize Hydro One, because I understand that if a business owns Hydro One, they're going to want to make a profit, and that profit will come by way of higher rates."

So the government of Ontario of the day said, "No, we're backing off the selling of Hydro." Even the Conservatives understood that, and if anybody was going to sell Hydro One, it should have been the Conservatives. At least we understand—I don't agree with them—but they're the party of doing everything private sector, business kind of stuff, and they would see this as a way of being able to give the private sector yet more business opportunity. I would have understood the Conservatives doing it. I wouldn't have liked it; I would have opposed it; I would have spoken against it; and I would have fought it, as we did back in the 1990s when Mr. Eves was trying to do that. But in fact, it's the Liberals that are doing it. I'm saying, "My God, what is going on?"

I remember the speeches of members on the government side, like the honourable Mr. Bradley. The honourable Mr. Dalton McGuinty was here at the time and others—I don't know the ridings, I'm sorry, Speaker. I wish I knew everybody's ridings, but after 25 years, it's not something that comes easy to me. I know the names. I know all your names—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I'm from Vaughan. Vaughan.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Steve, you're a good guy. I get along with you quite well.

My point is that it's the Liberals who are doing it. They were the guys, I remember, in opposition to the Tories when the Tories talked about doing it. They were going apoplectic on the opposition benches, as if somebody had taken a knife and stabbed them in the heart. They just couldn't believe that the government was going in that direction, and they were just swinging from the chandeliers.

0920

I still think there are finger marks up on top of that chandelier from some of the Liberal members who were swinging off that chandelier when Ernie Eves was trying to privatize hydro. I think, if you went up there, you'd find the fingerprint marks on that chandelier.

But now you've got the right-wing Liberal Party. They're like Jim Prentice in Alberta. Really; they are Jim Prentice in Alberta when it comes to privatization. I listen to the government front bench heckle during question period when our leader, Andrea Horwath, stands in her place every day, day in and day out, and fights against privatization. They're using the same lines that Jim Prentice tried to use in Alberta. I just warn you: What happened in Alberta, my friends, could happen to you quite easily. People understand and smell a rat when there's a rat. And this is a rat. They just don't like this thing, and they understand that you can't survive more hydro increases.

It used to be in Ontario that Ontario Hydro was one public utility that generated electricity at cost. We decided many years ago that having one public utility generate

electricity at cost meant our rates would be cheaper. We had among the lowest hydro rates in all of Canada here in Ontario. We were there because we understood it wasn't just a question that our residents needed to have affordable electricity, but it was also a question of economic development.

All of those plants in southwestern Ontario, all of those mining and forestry operations in northern Ontario—large industrial users of electricity—they situated themselves and invested in Ontario. One of the reasons they did that was you were able to have access to safe, affordable, dependable electricity in the province of Ontario. So they invested billions of dollars to build plants, mines, paper mills—you name it—in Ontario, because one of the advantages was that Ontario advantage: Electricity was affordable and reliable.

Along comes a Liberal government, which was opposed to the Tories' musing on privatization. The Tories had started to do some privatization on the generation side by doing private power contracts. The Liberals swung on the chandeliers; their thumb marks are still up on that chandelier, I swear to God. And they were—

**Mr. Han Dong:** Not mine.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Not yours; you weren't here, in fairness. I can tell you Rosario's are up there. I can probably still see his particular thumb marks up there because he was pretty apoplectic about it.

**Mr. Han Dong:** Yours were there.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mine were there for darn sure, I've got to tell you.

Anyway, my point is, what we ended up with is that the Liberals, who were opposed to privatization, started privatizing on the generation side by signing all kinds of private power deals in order to build new electricity generation in the province of Ontario. As a result of that, the price of electricity in Ontario has gone up by 320%. That means if you were paying a hydro bill of \$100 a month 12 years ago, that \$100 hydro bill is closer to \$400 today. How does that make any sense to the consumer? And now these guys are saying, "Trust us. We did such a good job the last time. Trust us. We're going to privatize hydro."

Look what happened when they privatized winter road maintenance in this province. Granted, it wasn't the Liberals who started the privatization of winter road maintenance. It was started under Mike Harris and the Tories. They decided to get rid of the Ontario—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It didn't start under Harris.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** It started under Harris. I was there. I know it was under Harris. You weren't here; I was.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It was 50-50 under you guys.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** It was always 50-50.

See, the Minister of Transportation should understand the history of Ontario. Our winter road maintenance system in this province was a very good system. MTO had snowplows, sand trucks and others, and then they would augment that by hiring contractors if they needed that extra help cleaning our highways. It was a good system because Ontario didn't have to keep all of the snowplows

and trucks that it doesn't always use on the fleet. They had a very big fleet of sand trucks, plows and others, but they would augment using the private sector. The difference was that MTO was the one that decided when the snowplow would go out and when the plowing was to take place.

My point is this: The Tories started privatizing by getting rid of all of the government's snowplows. They got rid of all the snowplows. The Liberals stood in opposition to that. I remember because I had Mr. Bartolucci running around the province with me condemning the Conservatives for the privatization and the sell-off of MTO equipment when it came to winter road maintenance. We predicted together, "My God, this is going to be a real problem when it comes to highway safety in Ontario."

The Liberals get elected, and what do they do? They didn't just continue the privatization of the plows; they privatized the whole damn thing. They got rid of the engineers; they got rid of the inspectors; they got rid of the patrols. The whole damn thing was given over to the private sector.

Now, during that time, we were out there, my good friend John Vanthof and I and others, saying, "Look at what's happening on our highways. We have highways shutting down; we've got accidents going on." I'm getting phone calls from the police in the middle of winter saying, "I've got to close down Highway 11," or, "I've got to close down Highway 101," or Highway 144 or whatever it might be, "because of winter road conditions. This is something I've never had to do before."

We sounded the alarm. Give the former Minister of Transportation some credit. As a result of pressures that we put on him—mayors, myself and citizens who took the time to take pictures and videos of the condition of our roads and brought it to the minister—the minister bought some extra snowplows. We gave him full credit for that. We said, "Well, that is a step in the right direction." There were some 50 new plows that were bought for northern Ontario and about 100 overall for the province. But we still have a problem. The problem is, we still have those third-generation contracts that are in place today.

So the auditor comes out and says, "This thing is a disaster. It's a question where highway safety has been put at risk as a result of the privatization of our highway winter road maintenance system." And then the government stands in this House and says, "Trust us. We're going to privatize hydro. It's going to be great. It's going to be better. We're going to still have control." Give me a break. We saw what happened with the OPG privatization. We saw what has happened with the winter road maintenance. It doesn't work. It costs us more money, and in the end we have less control and the quality goes down.

So what's the upside for the province? Ms. Wynne, the Premier, stands in this House and says, "You know, we need to sell Hydro because the only way we could ever build infrastructure in this province is to sell off

Ontario Hydro." What a silly, silly argument from a very smart person, I've got to say.

You want to build infrastructure and you want \$4 billion extra—which is only about 3% of what we have to spend on transit, by the way. Well, there are ways of doing it. The first thing is what we've always done, which is to borrow. Borrow what you can afford. Don't borrow more than you can, and pay for it over time.

The government, in way of its HST inputs and changes to the HST, has given corporations \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion in gifts when it comes to this new HST policy that's now being enacted. It means to say that we, the taxpayers of Ontario, will be taking our tax dollars of working-class people and we're going to be transferring them over to the corporate sector to the tune of \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion a year so they can wine and dine people when they take them out on business meetings somewhere. Is that good for business? Is that good for the people? Is that a way of being able to responsibly spend the dollars of the people? You would expect Mr. Prentice to do that, and that's exactly what Mr. Prentice was doing. This Liberal government is doing exactly what Conservative governments have done in Alberta and are doing in Ottawa.

So the government says, "How do I find \$4 billion to be able to invest in transit?" You're talking about one \$4-billion hit in one year. I'm telling you right now that New Democrats have shown you where you can make \$1.5 billion each and every year to be able to offset the cost of transit: a moderate increase in corporate taxes. Our corporate taxes in this province are among the lowest in North America. I'm not arguing, as Jim Prentice would argue, as he did in the debates, that we have to raise corporate taxes to record numbers. No, no, no. Nobody here is arguing that. New Democrats understand you can't raise corporate taxes and let them rip, because there is a reality that we do compete with other jurisdictions. But when you're the lowest tax rate when it comes to corporations, how about we just raise them to the rate of Alabama? Why don't we try that? You think that raising our corporate tax rate to the same level as Alabama's is going to scare the heck out of the business community? I know they're not going to like it. I know they're going to rail about it. I know there's going to be four or five business executives sitting down on Bay Street talking about how they won't be able to donate to hospitals and how they have their own mortgages to pay and how brutally wounded they're going to be if they have to share some of the responsibility for building transit in this province. I understand that. I understand they would take full ads, if we were the government in Ontario, and they would fight us for five years, as they did when we were in government, because those guys, some of them—I'm not saying all of them. The more radical, right-wing ones are the ones we hear from. We don't hear from the reasonable people in the business community. We hear from the radicals, like my good friend O'Leary, whom I turn off every time he comes on TV because he nauseates me.



## 0930

Seriously, there are ways of being able to do this that doesn't mean we have to sell off Hydro. If we were to have a small increase on the corporate taxes, if we were to eliminate the HST input break that you're giving to corporations, we would have more than enough to be able to invest in transit, not only in the city of Toronto, not only in the GTA, but we would also have money to invest in northern Ontario. And here's the great thing: It wouldn't be one \$4-billion hit, it would be money that we'd have each and every year to make some good decisions about how we invest in transit.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I heard "Hear, hear" from my good friend the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I'm trying to be supportive.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm being very supportive. I'm giving you some ideas about how you can probably raise about \$3 billion a year each and every year to invest in transit.

But here's the other one: When you're investing, there are other places in Ontario called central Ontario, south-western Ontario, southeastern Ontario and northern Ontario, which also—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Niagara.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, that's the region I just mentioned.

They are the other places we need to invest in. We have infrastructure deficits in those communities—and the former Minister of Transport would know this—at a pretty serious level, and we need to find some way where we make sure that those communities are getting the assistance they need.

I give the city of Timmins as one example. We have a highway going through our municipality, Highway 101, which is called Algonquin Boulevard. It used to be a provincial highway. Mike Harris downloaded it to the municipality, along with a whole bunch of other highways to municipalities in northern Ontario and across this province. It used to be, when they would fix that road, it was a 90-10 split on what they called the Connecting Link Program. The province would pay 90%, the municipality would pay 10%. We now pay 100% of that money as a municipality to be able to fix that road.

I invite the Minister of Transportation to please take his ATV bike and run up Algonquin with me because that's what you're going to need pretty soon. That road is in such rough shape, it is horrid. We've actually got pylons along this four-lane highway where people are not able to drive because the road is in such bad shape. The municipality wants to make the investment that they need in order to fix the pipes underneath and to fix the road, but it's \$70 million. For a municipality, that's one hell of a hit.

I can say to the minister across the way, he has re-announced some Connecting Links dollars, but it's not—what is it, \$5 million?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's \$15 million, like it was before.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** It's \$15 million? Well, that project alone—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's \$15 million, same as it was before.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No, no. It used to be 90-10. Listen, it was 90-10. I was here. I know. I delivered the cheques myself when we were in government. It was 90-10, 90% province, 10% municipalities.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order, please.

I would ask the member if he would address the Chair and not the minister.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** That's okay. He's trying to argue something that is not.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Don't get him into the argument.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** But the point is, the municipalities are not able to front that bill alone, because these were provincial highways. They were never designed as municipal roads. They happen to be a highway that was going through your municipality that was downloaded to the municipality, and they can't afford to pay.

So I say to this government: Your plan to privatize hydro is one of the stupidest things that you guys have come out with, and it's going to be one of the things that is going to come back to bite you, should you proceed with it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I think the member for Timmins—James Bay accurately put the debate between our two parties: They believe that infrastructure has always been adequately paid for in Ontario, and we say not.

So let's actually have a history lesson, Mr. Speaker. When was the last time we spent anywhere near the amount that we're spending, of about \$13 billion, \$14 billion a year? I will tell you. It was 1968. I was 11 years old and John Robarts was Premier.

As a matter of fact, we are supposed to spend, in Canada, 5% of our GDP on infrastructure if we are going to keep up with countries like the OECD countries, never mind big countries like China. We got down to spending as little as 1.5% or 2%. We are doing what a lot of other places have done, which is, revaluing assets and taking that money to attract broader investments in those assets, and repurposing it. That's \$4 billion, Mr. Speaker, directly into infrastructure. Do you know that that is more than two entire years of infrastructure spending under Mike Harris's Conservative government? Just on that alone.

We went through years in Ontario when we didn't build any highways; we built no subways; we didn't repair bridges. Kenora has 19 bridges. I think we're the first government in 30 or 40 years to actually replace and start rebuilding bridges, thanks to our excellent Minister of Transportation. We barely broke \$3 billion or \$4 billion.

I would ask the member to take five seconds, go to a computer, press Google, "Canada's Infrastructure Gap"

by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. You can see, since 1955, that you barely broke \$3 billion or \$4 billion or \$5 billion in infrastructure. We are now three times that.

That's the reason they're the third party: because their facts are wrong, their analysis is wrong. We're very proud to be doing it. Now, if the federal government would ever come back to the level of spending that we had in the 1960s and 1950s, we wouldn't have an infrastructure problem anymore in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm pleased to bring some comments on the fine presentation by the member from Timmins-James Bay. I was actually looking at some old footage from question period back in 2006, and he hasn't changed a bit, I must say.

You know what? There have been some good arguments here on both sides, but the fact of the matter is that this government has done very, very little over the last 12 years when it comes to infrastructure. Now they're trying to make up for it, but at what cost? Spending has gone up dramatically and the debt has increased substantially in the province of Ontario, up to \$325 billion. At what cost are they dangling these carrots in front of municipalities, saying they're going to fix their infrastructure? Well, we know, because we've talked to the Auditor General. The Auditor General has reported back to this Legislature what the cost is. You can't build your way out of the economic recession that we're in right now with infrastructure. You have to manage your finances properly. The AG has said just that.

If you continue to spend more than you're taking in year after year after year, you have to pay for it somewhere. We're seeing it now with the crowding out of services that the province is supposed to fund. In our health care system, we have physiotherapy gone; diabetes test strips gone; registered nurses, 58 of them at Quinte Health Care, gone. We're seeing the crowding out of the services that this government is supposed to be providing at the cost of dangling infrastructure dollars that haven't even started to flow yet in front of municipalities. They're empty promises. They announced \$130 billion in their budget this year. They did that last year, and what has happened? Nothing. This is all a charade. It's all a shell game. Until they start to manage their funding and their finances properly, we're going to keep digging the hole deeper in this province—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'm going to say to all the members on the government side that the noise is very loud, and I'm going to start singling people out.

Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It was quite interesting, listening to my fellow northern MPP. What he's saying is true. Come and see Highway 144 just outside of Chelmsford going towards Dowling and Cartier; it is unbelievable. You cannot drive in your lane. The potholes are so big,

and they all happen to be about three feet from the right margin. So you can't go right, because you will be in the ditch. There is no shoulder on Highway 144—it's not a road like down south, but it is a provincial highway. So you have no choice but to go left. What happens when you go left, Speaker? Well, then you're in the lane of traffic of the people coming the other way. This is the main road for all of the mines that are in the northwest part of my riding; they all take Highway 144. You have those great big trucks—double tandem trucks—full of ore, coming down this highway non-stop. The highway is so bad that every day I get worried people; they are worried for their lives. Do we need infrastructure money up north? Absolutely, but not by selling Hydro One. This is the wrong way to go. Hydro One is only 3% of the infrastructure money that you are making promises on. This is the wrong way to go. Hydro One gives us dividends. It helps us by hundreds of millions of dollars every year to reinvest in infrastructure—in hospitals and roads.

0940

When we see in the budget things like “money will flow in areas that have population growth,” what does that mean to me, representing a northern riding? It means none of that money will come to Nickel Belt. There is no growth in the northern rural regions of Nickel Belt. Sure, Sudbury has growth but not Nickel Belt.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me. I'm very happy to speak to the budget motion.

The budget motion talks about building Ontario up. Let me tell you why I support this budget motion: For me, it is building Ottawa up. I have the great privilege of representing the great riding of Ottawa Centre. It's the second-largest city in the province of Ontario. We have a lot of infrastructure needs in my community. What this budget means is that we'll continue to invest in the critical infrastructure that we need in the second-largest city of this great province, the nation's capital.

Our government is already spending \$600 million in building phase 1 of the light rail transit system, the Confederation line. It's a state-of-the-art rail system that we are building that will be running through my riding of Ottawa Centre to the riding of Ottawa-Vanier and will be connecting our two universities together with the downtown core. We need to continue with that momentum in Ottawa. We need to build the second phase of our LRT, which will go into the great ridings of Ottawa West, Ottawa-Orléans and Ottawa South, so that our entire city, from the airport to the train station to our two universities, is connected to our downtown core.

The only way we are going to be able to do that is by supporting this budget, by making the very important infrastructure investments that we are talking about in this budget to ensure that we've got that public transit infrastructure that is so needed, because it's critical for



our economy in Ottawa and it's critical for our quality of life. I support this budget because it is building Ottawa up.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We return to the member for Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I just have to say, it's very disappointing to listen to the government. I don't think either the Conservatives or New Democrats are saying they're opposed to investing in infrastructure. We have all, as governments, had to invest. I was part of a government that put two subway lines into the city. Unfortunately, the Tories cemented the one on Eglinton. But we did that how? We did that in a thoughtful way by doing what other governments have done in the past: finding the money within our budgets or borrowing the money to do it.

I've said to the government that there are options for them. They don't have to sell Hydro. You can stop the HST inputs—a billion and a half dollars. You can look at a modest increase to the corporate tax rate, at least to the rate of Alabama. That would at least give you, between those two initiatives, about \$3 billion a year. Well, the government is saying, "No, no. The only way we can do this is to sell Hydro once, and we'll have \$4 billion"—once.

What are you going to do the second year, the third year, the fourth year? Are you going to have to sell everything and have nothing left to even get close to what you need to spend on infrastructure? It's a bad fiscal decision. Selling Hydro is not the way to build infrastructure.

I encourage those people who are watching: What they should be doing is writing to the Clerk of the finance committee, Katch Koch, by email, asking to have the finance committee come to their community when it comes to hearings on the budget so that the public can express its views about this government's policy when it comes to the privatization of hydro. All you have to do to register and be in committee is to send an email to Katch Koch: [kkoch@ola.org](mailto:kkoch@ola.org). That will allow you to come to committee and tell these Liberals across the way, who campaign like New Democrats and govern like Prentice Tories, that they've lost their way and they have to stop doing what they're doing with the privatization of hydro.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'll be sharing my time with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, as well as the member for Ottawa–Orléans.

This has been very instructive to understand why those of us on this side of the House brought this budget forward, believe in it, will vote on it, and why the members opposite won't. It's been an abject lesson.

I'm going to be using a lot of the material in Hansard to help my constituents better understand the NDP and the Conservatives in their own words.

Let's take the member for Prince Edward–Hastings, who's a very thoughtful guy, and I quite like him; he's an excellent member here. But I have a feeling he's a little

lost today. He talked about how he thought infrastructure was important. Then maybe he can explain to us—and this is also true for the period of time the New Democrats were in power. During that entire period of time, studies done by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity—their friends, one left- and one generally right-of-centre policy group. They point out that during the Rae government and during the Harris government, we spent in Ontario two and a half times less on infrastructure than the other provinces.

As a matter of fact, since I was born, in 1957, that was the lowest period of spending in the history of Ontario. The member for Prince Edward–Hastings might like to know that in the last year of the Conservative government, which was the closest indication to me of how they behaved, they spent \$1.9 billion. That was the smallest infrastructure spend in Ontario history.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** They shut the lights.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We had rolling brownouts. We had infrastructure problems—potholes popping up like potatoes. It was a state of disrepair.

As a matter of fact, you have to go back to the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s to see total government spending in Canada at 3.5% of GDP. At the same time, through most of this period of time, the Europeans, the Chinese, most of the major, strong economies were spending 4%, 5% and sometimes 6% or 7% of their GDP. We are up to about 2.5% to 3% of GDP in Ontario, just on the provincial spend alone.

I want to give a shout-out to municipalities. I remember in 1989, when I first took my seat as a city councillor, my very first speech when I started my first day as a politician was on the need to get back to 5%-of-GDP spending. It was 26 years ago that I started that. We did the deal with the former Liberal government. We got five cents of the gas tax transferred to municipalities. That was one of the biggest permanent infrastructure investments, which we're very proud of, and we've continued to protect that and build on additional programs with our municipalities. I'm very proud of our Minister of Infrastructure and our Minister of Transportation, who have been a very dynamic team, who are ensuring that we're getting good value for our tax dollars through innovative programs, like our AFP program and many of our investment programs, and the restoration of Connecting Links.

During the period from about 1968 to 2003, we saw a steady decline. As early as 1970, two years after we abandoned this high level of investment—the year I started my first year in high school—we were already down to less than 1% of GDP being spent. They actually got to what was an effective rate, when you use the actuarial system, in about 2000 or 2001. When you look at the accrual or the—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Amortization.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —amortization of costs and the lack of investment and decline, the Centre for Policy Alternatives actually has their chart on infrastructure in Ontario going into the negative for the first time.

The problem we have is that when we were in surplus, which we will be back to in two years, we started re-investing in infrastructure. We went from the \$2 billion the Tories were spending per year, up to \$3 billion, to \$4 billion. By 2006, we were at about \$8 billion. By 2010, we were up to about \$10 billion, \$11 billion, and then up to \$13 billion and \$14 billion, where we need to be and where we need the federal government to make an equivalent commitment, because they should be paying as in most countries, like the United States, where they pay for 100% of the national highway system, and unlike Canada, where we pay for 100% of the Trans-Canada system.

0950

Ontario is picking up almost half of the entire infrastructure spend annually in our province, and municipalities the other half. You're getting from the federal government, depending on the year, 5% or 10%, if we're lucky, and less than that in some critical areas.

This is completely unsustainable. If the Conservatives actually really believe in infrastructure, why aren't they jumping all over the federal government to start matching us? Why can we not find, since John Robarts—they tease us that we go back to John A. Macdonald. I have to actually go back to John Robarts to find a Conservative Premier who spent more than 1% of GDP on infrastructure.

#### *Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I will send the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock both studies that were just completed. I'm happy to share them with you. You want to argue with the experts who have no political agenda and certainly don't tilt towards our party.

Finally, I want to make the point of the problems that we have right now. For 50 years in Ontario, prior to the 2004-05 period, two problems occurred. We spent—they estimate in Ontario—about \$24 billion less than we should have total between all governments annually. That accrued over time to become a very big problem, and it became a very big problem in many ways. If you go to Vaughan, or you go to Oshawa, or you go to Ottawa-Vanier, or you go to Glengarry-Prescott-Russell or Kitchener, you'll find that each of those communities have highways that should have been built in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and widened, and needed transit systems that should have been built 30 or 40 years ago.

When every other province in Canada was spending 250% more per year than we were based on population, they were building those things. Montreal has a great subway system. Vancouver has a great LRT system. They built highways and roads. We did not build because we were spending at a two and a half times lesser rate of investment. That means that for 50 years, we actually doubled our population but we did not double our infrastructure. We barely, barely, barely kept up. We didn't keep up with population growth. We have entire communities that don't have the basic infrastructure that other Canadians and Americans have.

The second piece of that is it's all old. Stuff that was built in the 1950s, like those of us who were born in the

1950s, need new bits and new pieces, and a little bit of an uplift and a tuck here and there. So all of this stuff, because 80% of our infrastructure out there was built in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s—80% of it is all aging at the same time. My friend the Minister of Transportation, my friend the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure and the Premier would all tell you, and any member of this House will tell you, that we have an infrastructure crisis in this country; that we are the first government to stand up and address that problem, because almost all of the infrastructure in this province is underinvested in.

#### *Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The member from James Bay continues his mythological view of the world, that somehow he thinks that they actually spent more than 1%. So I will, after I speak, send him a copy of the report so he can see it himself and acquaint himself with the facts.

Finally, not only do we have this huge repair bill—the underinvestment—now we've got climate change. That's the third leg of the problem. We spent 50 years under-investing by as much as \$24 billion a year. We spent 50 years not doing the basic repair work, so it all—we have a huge backlog of repair on bridges, culverts, roads and transit. The third problem now is, we have climate change. So if you're in Pembina or if you're in Burlington, what you would know is this: You would know that your sewer system, built to a one-in-a-hundred-years flood event, as in Burlington, has had two one-in-a-hundred-years flood events in 24 months. I think that makes it a one-in-one-year flood event that that sewer system has actually been built for, effectively, if you look at the last two years. So we now have to address climate change, which is a bigger challenge than any other government has.

Those three challenges we are taking on. We are spending at levels not seen since John Robarts, and we're darn proud of it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Today's subject for me to speak about is the budget. I think this is very important to Ontarians and to Ontario. In the budget, you will notice on page 104 that the budget talks about international trade.

Recently, in April, I was away—not on holiday—I was away on a couple of trade missions. One to China—I came back for one day, and then I went to Mexico for another trade mission that lasted five days. I spent the majority of April out of the country, trying to do something good for Ontario and for Ontarians.

Allow me to talk a bit about the trade missions, and I'm going to get back to why I talk about them. I had the fortune to co-lead the trade mission to China with Minister Leal, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. We spent about nine days in China. We visited Beijing and a province called Shandong, and after



that we went to Nanjing in Jiangsu province, which has a 30-year trading relationship with Ontario. After that, we went to Shanghai, and after that, our last stop was in Hong Kong.

We were in Beijing, and we did a lot of things. For example, we had a grand presentation telling the Beijingers how good Ontario is and the reasons that people from China should invest in Ontario. At the same time, we had a smaller-sized meeting—we call it a round table—where we prequalified about eight entrepreneurs and had them come to a meeting room and do some really hard selling, in terms of trade and in terms of investments, and, again, persuading these people, so hopefully one day they will come to Ontario and look at Ontario—look at our products—as well as look at the investment opportunities that we may have provided for these people.

There's one supermarket, which is a very famous supermarket in Beijing. It's called the Beijing Hualian Group. Last year, I think, they set up a head office in the Toronto area. The reason for that is really having people in Ontario go to every corner of Ontario and purchase products from Ontario, and very specifically agricultural products.

After Beijing, we went to the province of Shandong. By the way, Shandong is one of the three leading economic provinces of China. Also, Shandong ranks number one in terms of agriculture. We went there, we had a very successful time because Mr. Leal was able to attend one of the largest—I think it's the largest—vegetable shows in all of China. There were billions of people—really a lot of people—there that morning. There were only three speakers, and Minister Leal was able to speak for a few minutes and tell billions of people how good Ontario is and how good our agriculture and environment is for growing, for food processing and all that. So Minister Leal did a fantastic job in terms of promoting trade in Ontario.

At the same time, again, we had the round table in Shandong with about eight to 10 people, and we talked to these people. The good news is, after the meeting, at the end of this month, in May, a majority of these 10 people will be coming to Ontario. They're actually committed to a reverse trade mission to Ontario at the end of this month, so that they have the opportunity to look at us and fund our products—perhaps a project for investment there.

Leaving Shandong, we went to Nanjing—as I mentioned before—the capital of Jiangsu province. Jiangsu has a 30—oh no, the time is running out and I haven't touched on anything here. Anyway, I was in Nanjing, and then I moved on to Shanghai and Hong Kong.

1000

Let me talk about Mexico, Mexico City. I can tell you, yes, Mexico has challenges. At the same time, Mexico has tremendous potential for Ontario to expand into that market because, after all, Canada, America and Mexico are the three amigos of NAFTA. There is tremendous potential there. That's my observation.

After Mexico City, we went to Guadalajara, the city that hosted the last Pan American Games.

I have people now pointing at me and telling me to stop. Maybe I'll find another opportunity. I'm going to sit down and allow my colleague to speak for five minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Ottawa—Orléans.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** It gives me actually great pleasure. Je me lève aujourd'hui avec fierté pour parler de notre budget, un budget dont le but ultime est de favoriser l'essor de notre extraordinaire province, l'Ontario.

Our government is committed to making the important and tough decisions in order to help Ontarians, including my constituents of Ottawa—Orléans. This budget contains many measures that ensure Ontarians continue to succeed and thrive. This legislation is all about building Ontario up and helping all of our communities.

This budget addresses the issues that face all Ontarians. I want to take the opportunity to talk to you, when I read the budget, about a few aspects where I think the people of my riding will actually—although Ottawa—Orléans is not mentioned, do you know what, Mr. Speaker? In several aspects, my residents, my constituents, will benefit from this.

If I look at one aspect, I was very happy to see our renewed investment of \$250 million over two years in our youth strategy fund. That fund previously helped over 200 students or new graduates in my riding. So I was very happy, très fière de voir qu'on avait renouvelé notre investissement dans la jeunesse. Donc, merci aux gens qui ont pris cette décision-là.

I know that my constituents also want access to mental health care outside the clinical hospital setting. They want services that are in the community, closer to home. This is why, again, I was happy to see a \$138-million investment that we will be making over the next three years to expand community mental health services.

I must say, I had prepared about seven minutes of debate here, so I have to reduce my time a little bit.

One thing, and I'm going to look at my minister right across from here, right beside me: Over the past decade, the east end of Ottawa, particularly in my riding of Ottawa—Orléans, has seen a housing boom. Our government has put in place a lot of apprenticeship programs. Again, we have renewed that investment of \$55 million to support apprenticeship training.

Another aspect of this budget that I found most interesting is the aspect where—you know, governments sometimes have to make tough decisions, and in the past few weeks we have made some very tough decisions so that our government can build the infrastructure our province and our economy need to stay competitive. We will invest \$130 billion over the next 10 years, including dedicated funds for Moving Ontario Forward. This is a record investment, not just for Ontario, but for Canada.

I want to take this opportunity to talk about our Moving Ontario Forward strategy. This will invest \$31.5 billion over the next 10 years in making our roads better, investing in cutting gridlock and making sure Ontarians arrive home faster and safer so they can spend more time with their family.

Une majorité d'Ontariennes et d'Ontariens doivent se déplacer pour se rendre à leur lieu de travail, que ce soit en voiture, en train ou en autobus. Croyez-moi, je sais ce que cela veut dire. Je représente une circonscription qui se déplace en grande majorité pour aller travailler, donc je sais que cette infrastructure et ces montants alloués vont permettre possiblement à ma communauté d'Ottawa-Orléans de bénéficier.

Je crois que mon collègue d'Ottawa-Centre a fait les références. Nous avons désespérément besoin d'infrastructure dans Ottawa-Orléans—la phase 2 du train léger—donc, je vais continuer de discuter de ça ici dans la Chambre.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I have to commend people across the room for speaking positively about the budget, because it takes a lot of talent to spin that you're somehow making an investment whenever you spend money. That isn't always the case.

Most of us here are homeowners and we can certainly understand, now that we're starting to see—certainly in Vaughan, my city—secondary suites become legalized. People are starting to invest in their homes to build these secondary suites, which are often basement apartments, but they could also be an apartment over a garage. That is an investment. Why, Mr. Speaker? Yes, you're spending money on your home, but you're going to get income from it. You're going to rent it out to a family or an individual, and then that will provide you with income. So in terms of investing in our province, "investment" means there's going to be some kind of income.

We do not believe that maintaining our highways is going to somehow bring income and prosperity to our province. Yes, we have to maintain our roads, and yes, we have to invest in developing better transit and infrastructure and building more bridges, but we also have to focus on the fact that we have to work within our budget. That's what we're here to talk about. We're here to prioritize our spending, to focus on the things that will bring investment into the province. I think that we have to speak to those future investors and we have to ask them, "What will help you to invest in our province?"

We just heard last week, a few days ago, that GM is not investing in Oshawa. It's very simple. Let's talk to GM. They're going to say the high hydro costs that this government is wearing is the cause of them moving out of the province. The future pension plan—these are all things that are costing us revenue.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to rise and add some comment to the discussion around the budget.

There's been a lot of talk about having money to build infrastructure. One of the solutions from the other side, from the government side, is to privatize hydro. I can tell you that I've not had one single constituent in my riding, or in any of Windsor-Essex county, who have supported selling off Hydro. In fact, time and time again we're

hearing that they already can't afford to pay their bills. So if we're looking at selling off Hydro, the price of hydro is going to go up even more, and the people in my riding aren't going to be able to use the roads. They're probably not even going to be able to afford to get to work. They're not going to be able to afford public transit, they're not going to be able to afford a vehicle, so they won't be able to afford the roads that they're suggesting they're selling off Hydro for.

It's clear that the people in my riding are saying that the government's not listening to them. I think that's a clear message across Ontario. The government's going to do whatever it is they want to do. They say they're listening, but—my father-in-law has this wonderful saying: "Just because we've spoken doesn't mean we've communicated." What that means is, just because you've heard me doesn't mean you're listening. I think that's the motto from the other side: We hear you, but we're not really listening.

Another important thing: When we're talking about the money that we actually make as a province from hydro that can be invested back into Ontario, one of the big issues right now is education. I know the minister stands up all the time and says that we're holding the line on education. It's stable. But in their own budget, page 230 of the budget, "Summary of Expense Changes Since the 2014 Budget," they brag about saving \$248 million on education. They're spending \$248 million less. They're bragging about it. Yet we have infrastructure in education. Renewal costs haven't gone down. The cost of hydro: not going down, and it's going to go up even more if they sell Hydro. Cost of transportation: not going down, and special education needs are going up. That's money that could have gone back into the system to support the students and the families.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** With the two minutes that I have, I want to begin by congratulating the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade and of course our colleague from Ottawa-Orléans for the enlightened contribution that they made to this morning's discussion around the budget. Of course, it is unfortunate that members across the way from both the PC and NDP caucuses have chosen yet again to express what I would argue is a somewhat confusing and mixed message with respect to how we should be moving the province forward.

1010

I would say to the member from Thornhill, my neighbour in York region, that I can't think of many other regions in the province—and I say this somewhat proudly—that are benefiting in terms of economic productivity because of our infrastructure investments over that which is occurring in York region.

Specifically around job creation, I would let that member know that the investments we're bringing forward through our Moving Ontario Forward plan, the in-



vestments in transit, transportation and other critical forms of infrastructure across this province, are actually helping to create and sustain 20,000 jobs annually. That's not just 20,000 jobs; that's 20,000 families that are benefiting directly because they have that ability to improve their quality of life to afford so much more, specifically because of our ambitious plan.

Of course, all morning I've had the opportunity to hear members from the NDP caucus, including the member from Windsor West who just spoke, but more interestingly the member from Timmins—James Bay, who spoke at length this morning on the budget. I'm sure that people watching at home, whether they're from Timmins—James Bay or my riding of Vaughan, when they see that member from Timmins—James Bay speak, could be forgiven if they thought instead that they were tuning into the Alberta legislative channel.

But having said that, on this side of the House, whether we're representing communities like Markham or Toronto or Glengarry—Prescott—Russell or Kitchener or Davenport or Ottawa, the north, the southwest, the east, on this side of the aisle we are supporting this budget because it will help every single corner, every single region of Ontario. Let's support the budget. Let's keep building our province up.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to add a couple of comments. I'm conscious of the fact that most people bring to the table a vast array of numbers. I believe there are only two numbers that you need to understand. One is the fact that the debt of this province is close to \$300 billion and the interest that it requires to be paid is \$11 billion. Those are the two numbers.

Normally, in a more healthy, balanced system, a government would use its revenue to pay for infrastructure. That's actually what people think we're doing. What they don't understand is the impact of \$300 billion worth of debt and the \$11 billion that goes to service it. If you take that \$11 billion, it could actually be spent on the kind of infrastructure that we're all talking about.

No one disputes the nature of the need for any economic unit to have infrastructure. What we object to is the fact that this is like selling the car and you now can't get to work, or looking at selling something that makes money, which is Hydro One, but you're going to prevent that revenue from being generated. And it's all because of the lack of proper, balanced funding.

When you look at the accumulation of this almost \$300-billion debt, it has accumulated exponentially under the Liberals. And when you look at \$11 billion—individuals know about paying interest on personal debt. Can you imagine what this province could do with \$11 billion? A lot of infrastructure.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the Minister of the Environment. You have two minutes to respond.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I would like to thank the members for Thornhill, Windsor West and York—Simcoe,

and the Minister of Transportation for their insightful comments.

Maybe I should just pick up from the member for York—Simcoe. First of all, when you last left office—if you're going to be critical of us, one should be prepared to have the mirror held up back again—you had a \$5.6-billion deficit and you were spending \$1.9 billion on infrastructure that year. That was the lowest infrastructure spend and, I'll remind you, it was a deficit that we got rid of. We're now getting rid of a second deficit that was at the end of a global tech boom.

Through the period of time when the New Democrats and Conservatives were in power from the mid-1990s to the beginning of the last decade, Ontario was spending two and a half times less on infrastructure per person than every other province in Canada, and it was the record low.

Then the deficit: Well, every province in Canada and the federal government went into deficit after 2008. We all did that together to rebuild.

We committed, as we were coming back to balance, that one of the things we would not cut was infrastructure. So we continue to build. The \$13 billion: The last time we saw that level of spending, as I said, was in 1968 under John Robarts. That was the last Premier of this province who actually made that commitment to at least 2.5% to 3% of GDP going to infrastructure.

It is the oldest and most Conservative notion in Ontario—when you weren't the second party, and had 50 or 60 seats—that you used to believe in. I would say to both parties opposite, if you embrace this idea, this very long Ontario tradition of spending at least 2.5% of GDP on that and working to get the federal government to do that—Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a shout-out to municipalities which have consistently been investing about 2.5% of GDP in Canada and across the province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you very much.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Speaker, with your indulgence, I've got a good group of people here visiting Queen's Park today. With the Unifor national skilled trades council, we have Dave Cassidy, Joe Elworthy, John Breslin, Phil Fryer, Ray Hamel, Mike Aquilina, Nelson Gagné, Bill Dickson, Paul Renaud and Ashok Venkatarangam.

As well, I have great friends, corrections officers, who are here with their daughters: Randy Simpraga, who is the president of Local 135 with OPSEU, and Carsten Schiller. They are joined by their daughters Sydney Simpraga and Briana Schiller. I'd like to welcome them to Queen's Park here today.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I have two individuals who have been stalking me for the last three days. Luckily, they are my interns. They are in the members' gallery. Their names are Alexis Green and Mitchell Stein. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's my pleasure to welcome to the House Lori and Rob Gordon. They hail from the Belgrave area, and they're here with their daughter Clarissa, who will be participating in the Minister of Education's forum today.

On behalf of Bill Walker, I'd also like to welcome Matthew Milencoff, a student from St. Mary's High School in Owen Sound, and Phil Dodd, executive director of Keystone Child, Youth and Family Services.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's a great pleasure for me to introduce two interns of mine, Gazal Amin and Carly Byberg, sitting in the members' gallery. They are the most enthusiastic and hard-working interns I have ever had. Please join me in welcoming them.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'd like to welcome Mackenzie Bass-Simpson, with the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board and my alma mater of St. Joseph-Scollard Hall, who is here participating as well.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** It's with great honour that I introduce three people in the east members' gallery: Mr. J. Murray Jones, the outstanding warden of Peterborough county; His Worship Mayor Daryl Bennett, mayor of the city of Peterborough; and Jay Amer, who is Ontario's representative for New York state and Governor Andrew Cuomo.

I'd like to welcome everybody from 11:30 to 1, room 228 to 230, for the annual Peterborough Day here at Queen's Park.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am delighted to welcome two interns who are working in my office this summer: Meg Cormack and Domenic Bitondo. Welcome and enjoy.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I am delighted to introduce the family of page captain Ethan McCready-Branch, from the great riding of Kitchener Centre: mom, Estelle McCready-Branch; dad, Greg Branch; sister Brianna; sister Eliza; brother Brent; brother Eli—it's a big, happy family—and grandmother Margaret McCready. Welcome.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park David Houston, Tom Sears and Pietro Pantarotto Perego, a Rotary exchange student from Brazil. Welcome.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** On behalf of the member for Mississauga-Brampton South and page Thomas Atkinson, I'd like to welcome to the Legislature Thomas's mother, Cindy; his sister Angie; and his godmother, Denise Edwards. They will be in the public gallery this morning. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It's a great pleasure to introduce Evan Conover, who's a son of a good friend of mine and the nephew of my sister Diana, and an aspiring cabinet minister. Welcome Evan.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? I have my own introduction. I'm glad no one stepped on it this time.

In the Speaker's gallery is my lovely and long-suffering wife, Rosemarie.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** She has also been known to jump from higher places in defence of her family.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just thought I'd offer. Just saying.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On a serious note, members will be aware that, on today's Orders and Notices paper, there appear two notices of an opposition day to be debated next week. Under standing order 43(c), the Speaker is required to select one of these notices for consideration.

As occurred in November 2013, once again we have a situation where only four out of the possible five opposition days in the spring sessional period will take place. Each of the opposition parties is entitled to designate another opposition day, but only one is available. Therefore, I will be applying the same principle in selecting one of the notices today as I used in 2013.

Standing order 43(a)(iii) provides that five available opposition days in a sessional period are to be allocated between the two opposition parties on the basis of the membership of their caucuses relative to each other. In applying that same formula to the total of four opposition days instead of five, the result is that the third party is mathematically closer to being entitled to two out of the four opposition days than the official opposition is to being entitled to three of the four. Therefore, I decide that the motion standing in the name of Ms. Horwath is the one that will be selected for debate next week.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Congratulations, Gilles. Two wins this week to the NDP.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And one check for the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

Just a notice that I'm listening.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On a very serious note, on May 5, 2015, the member from Timmins-James Bay, Monsieur Bisson, rose on a question of privilege concerning tentative settlements in labour negotiations between Hydro One and OPG, and a union representing their employees.

Relying on media reports and statements by government ministers in the House and to the media, the member submits that a provision in the settlements would grant Hydro One shares to those employees. The member indicated that this provision undermines the authority of the House because it anticipates a reorganization of Hydro One and the passage of Bill 91, thereby amounting to a breach of privilege and a contempt of the House. The House leader of the official opposition, Mr. Clark; and the government House leader, Mr. Naqvi, also spoke to the matter.



Having reviewed various procedural authorities, our precedents and the oral and written submissions of all three members, I am now ready to rule.

I will deal first with the threshold issue. The government House leader raised a concern about the time lag between giving the requisite notice of the question of privilege and the incident giving rise to the notice. He pointed to my April 21, 2015, ruling where, acting under standing order 21(d), I exercised my authority without hearing from any member because of the unacceptable time lag in giving notice to the Speaker.

I do not have concerns about the timeliness of the notice here because, whereas the April 21 situation dealt with a single pre-planned incident which was complained about only four days later, this one deals with a series of interrelated pieces of information in an evolving public policy matter. This is not to give permission to members to delay raising a matter of privilege when they first perceive the possibility that one exists, but rather to accept that there may be circumstances when it could validly take some time on an evolving matter before any implications for parliamentary privilege are sensed. I therefore remind members that if a matter is serious enough to warrant a question of privilege, it should be raised in a timely way, in the manner outlined in standing order 21(c).

Turning now to the substance of the member's claim, I will deal first with the argument based on breach of privilege before turning to the argument based on contempt.

1040

With respect to the contention that there has been a breach of privilege, no member has identified which individual or collective privilege has been violated. For example, there is no indication that any member's privilege of freedom of speech has been compromised by virtue of anything that has happened—or been said—inside or outside the House with respect to the developments mentioned in the notice and the submissions. In fact, members have been exercising that privilege, and they may continue to exercise it when they speak in the House about those developments. Therefore, I find that a prima facie case of privilege has not been established.

With respect to the contention that there has been a contempt, the member for Timmins–James Bay referred to a January 22, 1997, ruling in which Speaker Stockwell found that a prima facie case of contempt had been established in circumstances where statements in government-sponsored advertising tended to “convey the impression that the passage of the requisite legislation was not necessary or was a foregone conclusion, or that the assembly and the Legislature had a pro forma, tangential, even inferior role in the legislative and law-making process, and in doing so, they appear to diminish the respect that is due to this House.” However, in a June 16, 1998, ruling, Speaker Stockwell approvingly cited a seminal 1989 ruling by Speaker Edighoffer indicating that “it is perfectly valid for the public service to proceed with plans based on a bill that is already in the system in order to be able to act swiftly, once that bill becomes law.” In a September 25, 2000, ruling, Speaker Carr reiterated this

view and also indicated that it is “a legitimate and necessary activity” for a government to plan for changes.

The takeaway from these and subsequent rulings is that, compared to a broad publicly directed advertising scenario that anticipates the passage of legislation, a targeted or internal planning scenario that prudently prepares for the enactment of legislation is less likely to raise a matter of contempt; such plans are part and parcel of the function of government. Although a Speaker could be convinced that a prima facie case of contempt has been established in either scenario, the prerequisite of establishing either a motive to, or the effect of, undermining the Legislature's role in the latter scenario is considerably more unlikely, as both common sense and procedural precedent confirms.

Let me now apply this to the case at hand. The member from Timmins–James Bay points to statements by the government to the effect that the tentative settlements between Hydro One and OPG and the union representing their employees provides for the distribution of shares to union members, a distribution that, according to the member, is contingent on the passage of Bill 91. The member indicates that the presence of the share provision in the settlements was premature, did not show sufficient respect for the role of the House and has pre-empted the legislative process on Bill 91.

In comparing the current matter with that faced by Speaker Stockwell in 1997, the very important difference is that Speaker Stockwell had in his hands a publicly directed advertising piece, authored by the government of the day, which in his findings explicitly diminished the role of the Legislature and presumed that the outcome of its consideration of legislation was a foregone conclusion. In the present case, there is no similar concrete evidence of that nature. The material presented to me and relied upon by the member for Timmins–James Bay is not in that same vein. I simply have not been presented with any document or communication authored by the government that inarguably presents the arrangements complained about as a fait accompli.

These arrangements described appear to be in the nature of normal planning the affected organizations would be expected to engage in. Presumably, if the legislation does not pass, these arrangements will not be implemented.

For the foregoing reasons, I find that there is no prima facie case of contempt.

In closing, I would like to thank the member for Timmins–James Bay, the House leader of the official opposition and the government House leader for their oral and written submissions on this matter.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Deputy Premier. Each and every day, Carol Milojkovich wakes up and thinks about her husband, Robert, and her son

Daniel. She wonders if they would be alive if the roads had been properly maintained. She wonders if they would be alive today if the Liberal government hadn't chosen to save a few bucks and sacrifice the lives of Ontarians like Robert and Daniel.

Carol Milojkovich deserves answers from this government. Deputy Premier, will your government call for a coroner's inquest into the wrongful deaths of Robert and Daniel Milojkovich?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the leader of the opposition for his question this morning. Certainly any time, as Minister of Transportation, I hear of a fatality on any of Ontario's highways during any season, my heart-felt condolences go out to the friends and the family of the victims involved.

The auditor's report that was brought forward publicly last week contained eight important recommendations. I, as Minister of Transportation, accept responsibility and accept those recommendations, as was explicitly stated in that report.

Of course, the auditor's report does follow up on the 2013 internal review that the Ministry of Transportation conducted that was undertaken or at least initially launched by my predecessor in this portfolio. There are a number of measures that were brought forward as a result of the internal review in 2013, and I'm sure I'll have a chance to discuss those.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Deputy Premier: The Wynne government ignored repeated warnings from staff and engineers that Ontario highways were unsafe. This Liberal government knew they were putting Ontarians' lives at risk. This Liberal government knew the contractors weren't doing their jobs. This Liberal government didn't act.

This Liberal government turned a blind eye for five years. The deaths of these innocent Ontarians is on this government's hands. These families need and deserve answers.

Deputy Premier, will you call for a coroner's inquest into these wrongful deaths?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** What I said last week, what I will continue to say and what I'll continue to focus on is making sure that, as Minister of Transportation, I take the responsibility, as I have, to make sure that we go forward, that we continue to work with our area maintenance contractors, that we pass the budget that the Minister of Finance presented here in this Legislature last week, because that budget contains provisions that will provide us with the resources to make sure that we have, for example, additional anti-icing liquid that can be used on highways around the province, that we have additional equipment that will help in congested urban areas and also across northern Ontario.

I'll also mention, as I've said before in this House, that since 2013, since we conducted the internal review at the Ministry of Transportation, we've added 105 pieces of equipment. We have brought additional oversight to this

entire undertaking. There is more work to do. That's the work that I'm responsible for, and we're going to get it right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Deputy Premier: On Tuesday, January 4, 2012, the families of Alyssa McKeown and Jessica Chamberland were shattered. These two women did everything right. They waited an extra day after the storm to travel on Ontario highways. They had snow tires. They weren't speeding. They were not drinking. The only thing that went wrong was that the roads they were driving on were not properly cleared of ice and snow. That wrong-headed decision to sacrifice proper road maintenance in order to save a few bucks was made by this government. That decision shattered these families.

Deputy Premier, will your government call for a coroner's inquest into the wrongful deaths of Alyssa McKeown and Jessica Chamberland?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, I thank the leader for his question and for his interest in this important issue. I know it sounds like I'm repeating myself, but I did say this in the chamber the other day. I've lived for 41 years in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—my entire life—and every single day to this day, including this morning, I use highways. My wife uses highways. Everyone on this side of the aisle does and on that side, as well. Very often my young daughters are in the car with us when we travel highways. I feel a very sincere and profound responsibility for making sure that we get this right.

In addition to what we've done at the Ministry of Transportation since 2013, in addition to accepting all eight recommendations from the auditor, we will continue to move forward. We will add more resources. We will work with our area maintenance contractors. We will continue to improve and enhance the winter maintenance program. It's what the people of Ontario expect and deserve.

## TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is to the Minister of Education. The parents of over 800,000 elementary students in Ontario don't know if their children will be in school on Monday. These parents don't know if they need to find alternative child care options. Everything is up in the air.

Minister, your response to those parents was you hoped "it will be a work-to-rule and not a full withdrawal of services."

**1050**

Yesterday, when talking about negotiations, you said that you saw a light at end of the tunnel. Well, Minister, I have news for you: That light was the train. It's coming at you and it's going to wreck.

When are you going to get serious about negotiations before you wreck the school year for these children?



**Hon. Liz Sandals:** It might surprise you to know this, but I actually agree with something that you said at the beginning of the question; I don't agree with the way you ended up. But I too am very concerned that we know that the elementary teachers are in a legal strike position. They have not informed us officially. They have not informed the boards officially as to whether it will be a work-to-rule strike or whether it will be a full withdrawal of services.

I know that the boards across the province—the English public boards—have been sending notices out to their parents and saying something is going to happen on Monday. Unfortunately, we have not yet been informed. I would encourage the union to get on with informing the parents what will happen on Monday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the minister: Over 800,000 children will be impacted on Monday and all you could say was that teachers have a general desire to strike. That's simply not true.

This Liberal government introduced Bill 122 and guaranteed a clear and consistent framework that works for all parties. You know what? We know that's not working. The Wynne government said this process has clear roles and responsibilities. Apparently, it hasn't been clear to you. Your role is to get a deal done and your responsibility is to keep these kids in the classroom.

Minister, step down or do your job. Will you promise these kids that they will be able to finish their school year?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I repeat what I have repeated over and over again: The only way that we will resolve this situation is by negotiating a collective agreement. I actually believe that the teachers would prefer to be in the classroom, for those who are out; that those who are being told to work to rule and withdraw things like preparing report cards or refusing to do the EQAO tests, refusing to take part in math—I believe those teachers would actually really prefer to be doing their whole job. Certainly, the children want to be in the classrooms. Parents want them in the classrooms. But the only way we can fix this is to negotiate. And unlike you, I do believe that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Again, to the minister: The Premier said she was going to light a fire underneath these negotiations. Well, apparently it's not hot enough yet. The students in Peel have been out for four days, at Rainbow in Sudbury they've been out for nine days, and now 14 days in Durham—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Many people seem to want to give a question and answer, so let's just settle down.

Please.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Mr. Speaker, that's 72,000 students out of the classroom right now. By the way, it is

your mess. Another day goes by, and the students are still out of the classroom.

Over 800,000 students could be affected as early as Monday. Each day is a day closer to prom and graduation, and you have to quit using these students as pawns.

Minister, why won't you resign and let someone who is actually willing to work get the job done?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no, no. I will remind you that when I stand, I want quiet. No last shots.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I do need to remind the member opposite that their solution of how to manage the education system was to fire 22,700 education workers and teachers. That—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** They seem not to believe me, but I'd like to quote from a—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'd like to remind—

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Oh, I think she's finished.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I can get my exercise. The next person who does it will get named and I'll make sure you hear that. Do you want to play that game? I will name you.

Carry on.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I would remind the member opposite of an exchange during the last election when the leader of their party was asked, "Will it mean fewer teachers?" The response was, "It does ... it will mean fewer teachers in our system." I would like to remind you that that was their response.

I have a totally different response. I want to negotiate a collective agreement, but I do need people on the other side to come to the table because it takes somebody—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Yesterday, I asked the Premier how many budget hearings she would schedule in northern Ontario so that families and businesses from northern Ontario can have their say. She didn't commit to hearing from northern Ontarians, in fact, not at all, not a single hour.

Why is this Liberal government shutting down people? Why are they shutting the door on people from northern Ontario who want to have their say on the sell-off of their Hydro One?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, we really believe that it's important that Ontarians do have an opportunity to contribute to a budget and to let government know what they think should be included in a budget. They should have the opportunity to speak. We also think it's

important that members of all opposition parties have the opportunity to examine important legislation.

The government House leader has presented a plan, a proposal to the opposition parties that would increase the standard for committee consideration to six days. That's more committee time than almost any budget has had in the last 25 years.

Let's just compare: under the PC government in 2002, zero days of committees; in the year 2000, two days; in 1997, two days; in 1996, two days; and under the NDP in 1991 and 1992, one day of committee consideration—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** It wasn't me.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I will allow someone to withdraw.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize to the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, what the Acting Premier is talking about is closure. Closure is shutting down debate and shutting down the voices of Ontarians. She's crowing about how proud they are about closing down the debate.

Yesterday I asked the Premier how many hearings she would schedule in southwestern Ontario so that families and businesses in southwestern Ontario could have their say. She didn't commit to hearing from the people in southwestern Ontario either, not for a single hour.

Why is the Liberal government shutting the door on people from the southwest who want to have a say on the sell-off of their hydro system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm sure the leader of the third party would like to know that there were pre-budget consultations in Windsor, London, Cambridge, Ottawa, Toronto and Mississauga. In addition, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs held public hearings in Fort Frances, Cornwall, Toronto, Sudbury, Fort Erie, London and in Ottawa.

We have been very open and transparent about our plan to maximize the value of the assets. It was included in the 2014 budget. It was included in the 2014 platform, the budget that was introduced twice—noting that the NDP ran on the very same fiscal plan.

In October, the advisory council released their interim report. That final report was made public before the budget. We've been debating this issue in this House for months. That will continue. As I say, there will be six days—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

1100

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Shame on the transparent Liberals. They had all those meetings, and not one single time were they coming clean with the people of Ontario about their plan to sell Hydro One. Shame on them.

Yesterday, I asked the Premier how many budget hearings she would schedule in eastern Ontario so that families and businesses from eastern Ontario could have their say. She didn't commit to a single hearing being set up for the people east of Toronto, either.

Why is this Liberal government shutting down people? Why are they shutting the door on people from eastern Ontario who want to have a say on the sell-off of their Hydro One?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me quote from the 2014 budget. The 2014 budget says, "Unlocking the value of these assets through operational improvements or asset sales gives the government an innovative revenue source to reinvest back into the economy. Net revenue gains from the divestment of certain assets will be invested"—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Please finish. Wrap up.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Even the leader of the third party said today on Newstalk 1010, "So there's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Acting Premier. Well over 26,000 people have sent the Liberals the message that they don't want the Premier to sell Hydro One. They know it's the wrong decision and they don't want to pay the price.

That's not just me, Speaker. That's not just card-carrying New Democrats; that is Ontario families, the people who actually own Hydro One. They know that once Hydro One is gone, it is gone forever.

Why is the Liberal government refusing to listen to the people who actually own Hydro One?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We have listened very, very carefully, and what the people in Ontario are saying is they want us to invest in transportation and other infrastructure that is so vitally important to the economy and to the lives of people who are fighting that traffic every day.

This budget is all about building Ontario up. It's about creating jobs. It's about increasing economic growth. We're going to build infrastructure. We're going to invest in people's skills and talents, create that business climate that businesses are asking for so they can flourish, and we want to move forward on building that retirement security.

We are increasing the Moving Ontario Forward fund so that we can invest in much-needed infrastructure, the largest investment in the province's history.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm hearing from people every day that they don't want the Premier to sell off Hydro One. They don't remember hearing about this plan be-



cause there isn't a single Liberal MPP who ran on selling Hydro One.

I once again remind all the folks on the backbench that they are the ones—they are the ones—who are going to have to defend this. Those backbenchers are the ones who are going to have to explain to their constituents why Hydro One is for sale and why hydro bills are going up. I know that because those Liberal MPPs have been hearing from people through our website.

Can the Acting Premier explain why Liberals are refusing to listen to the growing—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Sorry. Stop the clock.

I expect the same on both sides.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Can the Acting Premier explain why the Liberals are refusing to listen to the growing numbers of Ontarians who say that selling Hydro One is the wrong thing to do?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, we ran on building infrastructure, and that is what we are going to do.

I think it's important that we listen to what the leader of the third party said on the radio just this morning. She said, "So there's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns." The leader of the third party, on the radio just this morning, admitted finally that they ran on the very same platform that we did—the same fiscal plan that we did. They took our budget. They took our assumptions. They cut and pasted and put it in their platform. Whether they know it or not, they ran on the same fiscal platform, and that includes maximizing our assets so we can build this badly needed infrastructure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier's plan helps out Bay Street bankers, it helps out consultants and it helps out well-connected Liberals—not surprisingly, because the Liberals are listening to Bay Street bankers, they are listening to consultants and they are listening to their well-connected Liberal friends. But they are refusing to listen to families, and families are the ones paying the price.

The Premier keeps the budget hearings in lockdown. She's not prepared to hear from the people of Ontario. It's undemocratic. It is not right.

Now, will the Acting Premier and the Liberal government listen to the owners of Hydro One—the people of Ontario—and stop the sale of Hydro One?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I understand that the leader of the third party is heading west today. I hope, when she's there, she will ask the people about whether 15-minute service from Union Station to Bramalea is something that they would like to see. I hope, when she travels through the province, she will talk about regional express rail. Over 10 years, weekly GO trips will go from 1,500 to nearly 6,000 trips. That is what the people of this province are asking their government to provide.

There have been insufficient investments in the past. We are making the decision to build the infrastructure that individual people need and will benefit from in their daily lives, to say nothing of the economic benefit. We are spending billions of dollars, wasting billions of dollars, because—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Careful.

New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** My question is to the President of the Treasury Board. For the past month, we've been talking about your government's sale of Hydro One, and you have justified it time and time again by saying it is needed for infrastructure. But we now know you've decided to give away shares of Hydro One to employees of OPG and Hydro One as part of their new contracts, and I've sent you copies of those contracts, the tentative agreements.

You claim the deal is net zero—

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It is.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Finance.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** —but we know that in that deal, you're giving away stocks to those employees. You are providing wage increases over each of the next three years. You are increasing travel allowances. You're adding in possible lump-sum payments.

Minister, what are Ontarians getting to make this a net-zero deal?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me just finish my last sentence. Billions of dollars are being wasted in economic prosperity, lost—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no, no. Thank you.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Trucks are stuck on the highways, costing businesses billions of dollars. We are paying for that additional cost; make no mistake about it.

When it comes to the power workers' agreement—and I thank you for sending over not copies of the contract but—

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Tentative.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** No, actually, what you've sent over is what the Power Workers' Union is using to communicate with their workers, but whatever. This is a deal that is under ratification. We are going through the ratification process. We will continue to respect the ratification. It is actually a net-zero deal. Over time, it addresses the Leech report recommendations. This is a good deal—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Very close.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no. I will name.

Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Wage increases each of the years and shares with nothing in return sure sounds like zero to me.

Again to the Treasury Board president: You're trying to buy labour peace with the sale of Hydro One. Minister, you're giving away shares and massive increases funded by the sale. I'm still looking for what is net zero about these deals, as are the people of Ontario. You're setting a terrible precedent by having a fire sale to fund labour peace.

1110

We know that taxpayers were paying the power workers' pensions at a ratio of about 5 to 1. In this agreement, did you at least get those pensions contributions down to 1 to 1, as is the standard across the public service? Will that make this deal net zero? Is that how it's going to be net zero? Because we're still trying to figure out how you get zero. We've got all these numbers, but they all add up to zero. You are amazing with your math over there on that Liberal side of the House.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We actually respect the ratification process. We will not be talking about details of the deal because the workers are now in the process—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The workers are in the process of ratification, and we will not jeopardize that by talking about the deal in any kind of detail.

What I can tell you is that it is net zero. I can tell you that over time it addresses the recommendations of the Leech report but, most importantly, what I'm really delighted about is that workers are being given the opportunity—we'll see how they decide—and we are excited that the workers will actually have a stake in the success of a company.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To the Deputy Premier: Can the Deputy Premier please tell Ontarians where in her platform or in her budget it said she was selling Hydro One shares to pay for a collective agreement?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Many, many times in this House we have talked about how we have talked about maximizing the value of our assets. It was in the 2014 budget that I just quoted. It was in our platform. It was in our second 2014 budget. It was in your platform.

We are pleased that the workers have the opportunity to actually participate in the success of their company. That's a good thing, and I think the NDP actually would support the notion that workers would have a stake in the success of their company. We are moving forward. We are planning to move forward with the plan to build the infrastructure across this province that is so badly needed. That is why we are moving forward—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** With your math, by the end of tomorrow we'll have a surplus.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Renfrew, come to order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —to maximize the value of our assets.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Second time. Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To the Deputy Premier: Nowhere in your platform, nowhere up until this budget did you ever give an indication that, in fact, there would be a selling of shares as a way to negotiate a collective agreement. That's dollars that you're taking away that are not going to be invested into infrastructure. It's not going to be invested into transit. It's not going to do anything when it comes to achieving the goals that the government wants.

I ask you again: Can the Deputy Premier explain to the people why the Liberals are giving away shares in Hydro One without ever asking the people of Ontario, who actually own Hydro One, what they think?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, Speaker, over and over and over again in this Legislature we have quoted from our budget—the 2014 budget, the 2015 budget—about the decision to actually maximize the value of the shares of our assets so that we can build the infrastructure that I think all of us would agree is badly needed.

Let's talk about what we're getting. We are getting electrified Barrie line weekly trips from 70 to over 200; the Kitchener line—we've heard that from members of your own caucus—weekly trips from 80 to over 250, quadrupling the numbers. On the Lakeshore East line, the annual ridership will go from 10 million to 32 million. The Lakeshore West line annual ridership will go from 10 million to 33 million. These are huge improvements in our transportation infrastructure.

Across the province, through Connecting Links, through the Ring of Fire, through the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, Ontario is building up again. That's the decision we're making: to keep building this province up.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SERVICES DE SANTÉ MENTALE POUR ENFANTS

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, I know that every year in May we celebrate Children's Mental Health Week. Doctors, mental health workers, parents and advocates take this week to increase the awareness of the signs of children and youth facing mental health challenges in their lives, work on ending the stigma around mental health issues, and help children and youth understand the places they can go to receive treatment.

In fact, Minister, this past Monday I had the opportunity to join a number of leaders in children's mental health from Etobicoke at an event to celebrate Children's Mental Health Week: Ewa Deszynski from the Etobicoke



Children's Centre, Jane Bray from the George Hull Centre for Children and Families, and Barb Macdonald.

Minister, could you share with us how the government is recognizing Children's Mental Health Week this year?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I appreciate the question from the member during Children's Mental Health Week—fantastic.

Je suis fière de l'attention que notre gouvernement porte sur les matières de santé mentale des jeunes et des adolescents, non seulement cette semaine mais année après année.

Speaker, our government has a strong record of increasing investments in children and youth mental health services; in fact, more than \$440 million last year. We're improving treatment to children and families so they get it at the right time and close to where they live.

Just yesterday, I was at Sketch, a creative space that gives opportunities to street-involved youth, to announce our support for a program from the Toronto Homeless Youth Transitions Collaborative that will provide wrap-around mental health services to some of our most at-risk youth.

All these things focus on getting children the right support where they need it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Thank you, Minister. The program you spoke about sounds like it will help vulnerable youth who may not have other supports really get the focus and care they need to get back on their feet.

Mr. Speaker, it has been great to see the interest in Children's Mental Health Week this year. I can say that first-hand, based on the event I attended on Monday. We know that when our children and youth are happy and healthy, they have the conditions to thrive.

Could the government let this House know of any other investments it has made this week for Children's Mental Health Week?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** To the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** First, I want to thank all MPPs from all parties who came out Monday on the front steps of the Legislature for the formal launch of the mental health bus, which is an important service for youth in York region.

I want to also talk about an event that Minister MacCharles and I joined on Tuesday to announce that we're investing more than \$5 million to support a new facility within Youthdale here in Toronto that has in-patient beds specifically targeted for teens between the ages of 16 and 19. Once construction is complete, this facility is going to provide 10 additional beds and care for approximately 175 young people who are dealing with complex mental health challenges each year. On top of that, we're also helping Youthdale provide a day program for youth with difficult mental health challenges that will help more than 6,000 youth annually through that facility.

Mr. Spooker—sometimes, Mr. Speaker.

*Laughter.*

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, through the mental health and addictions strategy, we're working—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'm on a roll after "the member from"—

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Nickelback.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Through the mental health and addictions strategy, we're working to ensure our children and youth have the supports they need at such a critical time in their lives.

## WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** To the Deputy Premier: Your government sacrificed people's safety to save a few bucks on winter maintenance. The simple fact is that in the eastern region, you cut the number of snowplows by almost 50%. When accidents and fatalities started to mount, you blamed it on the weather. When your ministry engineers tried to tell you there weren't enough plows, you ignored them. When contractors met with us for help—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy House leader—second time.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** —you punished them.

Deputy Premier, how could you refuse to act when you knew it was your maintenance policy changes that were the cause of increased accidents, personal injuries and deaths? Why did it take the Auditor General's scathing report to finally get action? Is that why you're now limiting her powers?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, I thank this member for this question. I know it's important to people living in his community, as it is for people living right across the province of Ontario.

I've said this many times, and I have no problem whatsoever repeating it: The Ministry of Transportation began an internal review in 2013. It is important to note that the auditor was actually asked by the public accounts committee to come in during 2014. So prior to the auditor being asked to conduct her review, the Ministry of Transportation had taken it upon itself—as it should—to take a look at the program and to update it.

As a result of the internal review, Speaker, there were 105 additional pieces of equipment for both northern Ontario, for truck climbing and passing lanes, and also for southern Ontario, for ramps and shoulders. I remember being in the riding of Northumberland-Quinte West to make the announcement last fall with respect to the other 50 pieces of equipment that were being used—again, for ramps and shoulders—in southern Ontario.

I accept full responsibility. In fact, all eight of the auditor's recommendations have been accepted by me, as minister, and by the ministry. We continue to look for-

ward to working on this program to make sure that it continues to improve.

1120

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Back to the Deputy Premier. The Auditor General's report on winter road maintenance should make this government hang its head in shame. In her report, the Auditor General suggested that the problems were "foreseeable and could have been avoided...." But it's more than that. The decisions taken by this government were careless, arguably even reckless and irresponsible. Winter road maintenance is not some kind of frill service. It's an essential government function because in the winter in Ontario, if the highways aren't properly plowed, safety is compromised and the lives of motorists are at risk.

How does the government have the audacity to stand in this House and defend the indefensible?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member for that question. I think it's important to recognize—I understand that it doesn't fit entirely well with the narrative that the members opposite are trying to develop here, and that's fine—but in that same report, the report that contained eight recommendations, which we've accepted, the auditor did acknowledge that the additional resources that we've brought to bear since the internal review in 2013 have had a positive impact. That same report, along with other independent information, does demonstrate that over the last 13 years, the province of Ontario has ranked first or second in North America for highway safety. In fact, as I said the other day, in 2012, the only other jurisdiction in North America that had a better record for highway safety was the District of Columbia.

That doesn't mean the work is over. In fact, following her report the other day, I asked the auditor to come back here—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## NUCLEAR WASTE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Yesterday, we learned that a panel has signed off on this government's plan to bury nuclear waste near the shores of Lake Huron. Some 152 communities that share our Great Lakes are against this plan, including London, Windsor, Chicago and Toronto. Resolutions have been passed in at least five Great Lakes states to oppose this project. Ironically, this new threat to Lake Huron comes at the same time this government is introducing legislation to protect the Great Lakes.

Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change support his government's plan to bury nuclear waste in the watershed of Lake Huron?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We have a very good process in this country around making these decisions. This is under federal regulation and is a federal responsibility. I

think it would be very inappropriate for me or other members of this House to weigh in and create any impression that there's bias in that process.

We have nuclear storage in a province where 50% of our energy is generated by nuclear. There's obviously an issue of nuclear waste and nuclear waste management. The government's biggest priority is to ensure public safety and that this is stored properly and safely to the highest standards in the world, and to respect the regulation and jurisdictions of other governments that regulate and have to make these—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Well, this government may have faith in Stephen Harper. We don't. The government knows full well that the federal government has gutted environmental oversight in recent years. Due diligence has become more like a rubber stamp. We can't count on the federal government to do the right thing. We know a similar waste dump in New Mexico has used similar technology and failed twice, releasing radioactivity to the surface.

Will the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change step in to fill the gap in federal oversight?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** There is something called the Canadian Constitution, which both enables and limits the authorities of different governments. It is, quite frankly, beyond the ability of any government to interfere with that, and we're not about to start.

What we have done is that we introduced the Clean Water Act. We have water protection plans developed by these communities that address those things. We will ensure that within the jurisdiction and authority of the province of Ontario, we will take all measures within our constitutional authority to ensure that all waste—nuclear and other—is properly disposed of.

I'm not sure whether the member right now is suggesting that the current storage practices are better than what's being proposed. I'd like to hear his defence of the status quo.

## APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Ontario's apprenticeship system is a key part of building the highly skilled workforce our province needs to compete in today's global economy.

I understand that our government has already made substantial investments in the apprenticeship training system. Last year, our government invested \$164 million in grants and loans that are providing critical training and state-of-the-art equipment to both apprentices and employers.

Recently I was pleased to join the Premier and the minister at the Ironworkers Local 721 in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore to announce additional funding for apprenticeship training as part of Ontario's renewed youth jobs strategy.



Speaker, through you to the minister: Can the minister update the members of the House on how this new funding will benefit apprentices working in skilled trades across Ontario?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore for this question. Our government is committed to supporting Ontario's skilled trades and apprenticeship system. I was proud to join Premier Wynne and two members of this House, my colleagues, at the Ironworkers Local 721 last month to announce funding for three existing apprenticeship programs.

Our government is investing \$55 million in three programs that will help the next generation of skilled tradespeople in the province of Ontario to access the training, equipment and facilities they need to get high-quality jobs.

As part of Ontario's renewed youth jobs strategy, we are investing \$23 million in new funding in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund program and \$13 million in new funding in the Pre-apprenticeship Training Program. We are also committed to an additional \$19 million in the Apprenticeship Seat Purchase Program.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. It's reassuring to know that our government remains committed to supporting a high-quality skilled trades and apprenticeship system in Ontario.

Almost one in five new jobs in Ontario over this decade is expected to be in trades-related occupations. I understand that these new annual apprenticeship registrations have grown from about 17,000 in 2002-03 to more than 28,000 in 2013-14. It's imperative that our government continues to support Ontario's apprenticeship system in order to encourage young people to pursue apprenticeship and benefit employers who are seeking these highly skilled workers.

In my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, we're graduating a number of young people from Humber College, from the Ironworkers local. They depend on having a strong apprenticeship system. Can the minister tell the House more about this additional funding—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member again for that question.

I have toured dozens of training centres and colleges across the province of Ontario and have seen first-hand the passion and the pride that our skilled tradespeople take in their work. These new investments in apprenticeship training will help colleges and other training institutions to train more apprentices by investing in equipment, technology and space, and provide more in-class training sessions and work placements to people considering to enter a career in the trades.

Our government is also increasing the amount that all training delivery agents across the province of Ontario receive to train our apprentices. This additional funding in the Pre-apprenticeship Training Program will target underrepresented groups in the skilled trades, including

at-risk youth, aboriginals, women and newcomers to our country. Our government will continue investing in our young people by supporting a highly qualified apprenticeship program in our province of Ontario.

## JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Attorney General. Former justice of the peace Santino Spadafora retired days before he was to appear before the Justices of the Peace Review Council to face a disciplinary hearing for submitting false expense claims for over \$16,000.

1130

By retiring before the hearing, the charges were dropped and Spadafora has avoided his disciplinary hearing. We will never know whether the \$16,000 in expense claims were appropriate or false. What we do know is that by retiring the disciplinary hearing was dropped and Spadafora keeps his pension as a justice of the peace.

Spadafora asked, and the Justices of the Peace Review Council agrees, that his legal fees of over \$15,000 should be covered. You've had that recommendation on your desk since April 7. Do you intend to pay Spadafora's legal fees?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Justices of the Peace Review Council is an independent body that investigates complaints about the conduct of a justice of the peace and determines appropriate sanctions where necessary.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, the member from Leeds–Grenville

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** The council is also—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Perth–Wellington. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** —legislated to make recommendations to government about compensation for costs associated with hearings. If a recommendation is made, when it is made, I can assure you that we will review the council recommendation carefully.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're warned. I missed it, so the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

You have one wrap-up sentence.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** The recommendations are done by an independent body, so when it comes to me, we review it and I'll take the appropriate decision.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** The council is absolutely independent, but the recommendations go to you for a decision, Minister. The Justices of the Peace Review Council stated, "We note that the allegations were serious. This is not a case where the allegations of misconduct have been dismissed. His Worship Spadafora retired before the

evidence was called.” The only reason the Justices of the Peace Review Council did not hold the hearing is because Spadafora retired and they no longer have jurisdiction.

Minster, the public will never know whether costs over \$16,000 were false or true. He obviously retired early to avoid the disciplinary hearing. Why would you reward that bad behaviour by paying his legal fees? Do the right thing, Minister. Turn down Spadafora’s request to have his legal fees covered.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Again, the legal fees—it is reviewed carefully by the justices of the peace. They make recommendations. They make arguments before the Justices of the Peace Review Council, and then the recommendations—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington is warned, and I’m not impressed with what you’re saying.

Carry on.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** And then they make recommendations. The ministry, in this case, has received and is considering the council recommendation that it pays partial costs in this case. They are considering the council recommendation. I will take the appropriate decision in this case.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** My question is for the Acting Premier. As you know, I represent a northern riding. Do you know what has been on the mind of most northerners lately? The move of our search and rescue helicopter from Sudbury to southern Ontario, an hour-and-a-half flight away. The Premier is in Sudbury today. When asked about this risk to the health and safety of northerners, she said that she will have to make some sort of supplication on bent knees to her minister to see if he can help us keep our helicopter in northeastern Ontario.

Speaker, as far as I know, the buck stops with our Premier. So we’re all really worried. Where is the leadership on northern safety issues?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do understand that the minister is working with the deputy minister to get some important answers to this decision. It’s very important that we have the information about how Sudbury and the north are served by aircraft and search and rescue operations, and how this decision will affect service. The OPP are mandated to provide certain police services across the province, including aviation support. So, Speaker, we are actively looking at this decision.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It does not stop there. Gogama and Mattagami are trying to cope with the worst rail disaster in Ontario history: 33 cars derailed, caught fire, exploded, dumped their crude into the beautiful Makami River and Minisnakwa Lake. It has been 82 long days and our Premier still has not seen fit to come and visit us to support the locals, to reassure them that the province is

on their side, that they will be there to help them take on this multi-billion-dollar company so that they get treated fairly, and to answer some of their questions, questions as simple as, “Pickerel season opens next weekend; can we eat the fish?” Where is the leadership on northern safety issues?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do want to thank the MPP from Nickel Belt for raising this issue. I think you have heard from the minister directly that this is an issue that he is looking into. He is actively pursuing the information he needs to assure himself that this is, in fact, the right decision. If it isn’t, that decision will be changed.

Again, I thank the member for raising the issue, and I thank the minister for actually doing his job when it comes to making sure this is the right decision.

#### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Ontario is home to about 71 million hectares of forest and about 75 billion trees. This adds character to our province, and the people of Durham know well the recreational spirit and sense of connectedness with nature that this brings to rural communities. But it’s not just about character. Ontario’s forestry industry generates over \$11 billion in economic activity for our province and supports over 170,000 jobs in 260 communities across Ontario.

In northern Ontario, allowing industry greater access to forestry resources would support jobs and drive growth for many communities.

Could the minister please tell the House how the 2015 Ontario budget will provide more access to Ontario’s forest resources?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member very much for the question.

As a ministry, we’re very excited by the improvement in the growth that we are seeing in the forest industry. We’ve gone from a low at the bottom of the recession of about eight million cubic metres per year being harvested in the forestry industry—now we’re up somewhere in the neighbourhood of 12 million to 14 million cubic metres being harvested on an annual basis.

There are still challenges in the industry. This is still an evolving industry. But I’m very proud to say that this year’s budget commits an increase from a total last year up to this year of \$60 million for our resource roads access programs that will go specifically to helping the forest industry. This announcement in this year’s budget brings a total, should the budget pass, of over \$600 million for the forest industry on this one program only since about 2005–06.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** I would like to thank the minister for his answer and his continued advocacy for Ontario’s forestry industry.

Voices like his are important for those in our province who do not thrive in urban industries such as those in my riding. I’m pleased to see that our government is making



investments in infrastructure that would allow Ontario's forestry sector to gain more access to our province's forest resources.

But the forest industry is changing. We are seeing innovative technologies come out of the pulp and paper sector, new engineered forestry products, biomass fuel and even medicine being generated from our forests.

Could the minister please explain how our government plans to help the forestry sector make these important investments in Ontario communities?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Again, I want to thank the member for the question. As I mentioned in the opening answer, the budget contains \$60 million for the resource roads access program.

Another piece contained in the budget, and another reason why I'm hoping we're going to get the support of the opposition parties on the budget, is that, for the first time, forestry will now be eligible, under our Jobs and Prosperity Fund, to make applications. This is a very significant move for the forest industry. We are going to work very closely with my colleague the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to design a stream for the JPF through which forestry can make application. We'll work very closely with the minister to make that happen as quickly as we can.

1140

There is room for growth. There is room for innovation. We've increased the JPF from \$2.5 billion up to \$2.7 billion. That's in the budget as well. We're counting on the support of the other members to try to make this happen.

### HIGHWAY SAFETY

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, over a year ago, I raised an issue with the Minister of Transportation, who is now the Minister of the Environment, regarding changes to the Glanworth underpass at the 401. The minister committed in committee—he promised to listen and incorporate suggestions from local farmers and businesses in the final decision.

Minister, your ministry did not incorporate a single idea and is now favouring an option to eliminate the underpass completely, forcing heavy, slow-moving farm equipment onto a busy highway. Your ministry seems intent on putting the public at risk.

Minister, will you direct your ministry to select the option that listens to farmers and businesses and keeps the public safe?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member from Elgin—Middlesex—London for that question. I'd be happy to have a conversation with him—either ourselves, one on one, or staff to staff—about the specific item that he's raising here today. I know obviously it's of great importance to him and his community. I'm happy to have that conversation, and I appreciate him raising it here in the House this morning.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Minister, we've been exchanging letters back and forth for over a year now and nothing has changed.

Minister, your ministry promised to work with the local community, and not a single concern has been addressed. Obviously, the ministry is trying to save money; however, the option the ministry is favouring is going to endanger lives. We have seen with your winter maintenance what happens when your ministry cuts corners to save money: It puts people's lives at risk.

Will you intervene, listen to the concerns of the farmers and businesses and the municipalities who also agree with the options of the local businesses and farmers, and make the changes necessary and make the highways safe in the London area?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member for the follow-up question. As I said, I'm happy to have that continued conversation with that member to do our best to make sure that we are moving forward with a plan on that specific project that reflects what's best for the area but also what's best for the entire transportation network that we have.

Of course, because the member alluded to safety, I will say, once again, that over the last 13 years, here in the province of Ontario, we have had the first- or second-ranked highways across all of North America as it relates to highway safety. That's a standard and a record of which we're proud. Work needs to continue with respect to making sure we maintain that standard, but I am quite happy to have the conversation with the member following question period or in the hours or days ahead.

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Yesterday, Children's Mental Health Ontario released their first-ever report card on the state of child and youth mental health programs in Ontario. The findings are very concerning: 6,000 kids wait more than one year for mental health treatment. By next year, it will be double: 12,000 kids. Something must be done.

Will the Acting Premier step in and immediately eliminate the wait-list for child and youth mental health programs in Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I appreciated meeting with the executive director of Children's Mental Health Ontario, Kim Moran, earlier this week. The efforts that are reflected in their report card are saying that youth and families are being engaged to build a system that meets their needs.

I commend CMHO for recognizing the progress we have made in the mental health and addictions strategy with the Ministry of Health, and I appreciated their input as they walked me through that report card.

As I mentioned earlier, our investments are very significant in children and youth mental health. That's why we, as a government, introduced the Ontario comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy. More than 50,000 children and their families are benefiting from quicker and easier access to the right mental health supports.

We've supported the hiring of 770 mental health workers across the province, and we have the tele-mental health service, which provided 2,800 consults to kids last year. That's specifically recognized in the CMHO—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Speaker, simply by announcing money for mental health means nothing if we don't know where that money is actually going. We know that 70% of mental health issues emerge by adolescence, and without help these kids spiral downwards.

The report cited one parent who explained that his daughter tried to end her life while she was waiting for help. I think it's unconscionable that kids have to wait for life-saving treatment.

Will the Acting Premier immediately eliminate the wait-list for children and youth mental health programs in Ontario?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** We always know there is more that can be done to help children who are facing mental health issues, but we are very proud of our investments and we know exactly where those investments go.

As Minister Hoskins said, just on Tuesday we announced \$5.2 million for the Youthdale Treatment Centre to expand a very innovative and compassionate mental health centre there, a 10-bed facility as well as a day program for 150 youth.

As I said, we know there is always more that can be done, and we want to make sure that children and youth access mental health and addiction services where and when they need them. That's why we're transforming this sector, through our lead agency model, to coordinate the care that children, youth and their families receive.

I am proud that our government has buy-in from partners like CMHO, who said the lead agency model places the community sector at the centre of planning and coordination across—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

#### LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On a point of order: My party has a convention this weekend, so I would just ask that all members thank the member for Simcoe—Grey, the leader of Her Majesty's official opposition, for his hard work.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** While I—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Here we go. Hey, listen, I'm standing; I'm still going to name somebody.

I thank the member from Leeds—Grenville for stealing my thunder, because I had written a note for myself. I do want to say this as Speaker. I want to take the opportunity—just in case; we never know what happens, but just in case—I want to compliment and thank the member for his conduct, his service and his decorum when it came to being the official leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition. I enjoyed our time. So thank you very much, sir.

On a point of order, the member from Simcoe—Grey.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'll just say thank you to all sides of the House. It's been a pleasure, and I'm not dead yet; I'll be back Monday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Beaches—East York on a point of order.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** On a point of order from our side of the House: I've known the member from Simcoe for many years, attending his golf tournaments up in Nottawasaga. I'm delighted with the courage and respect you've brought into this House. I appreciate and admire your work. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Knowing that you're still going to be around, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1148 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I have two great groups of people to introduce today. It being Children's Mental Health Week, we have folks from Children's Mental Health Ontario, and a number of them are here. A number of them have been at Queen's Park this week, including Kim Moran, Sibel Cicek, Christine Pelletier, Janice Kelly and Margo Warren. Thank you for being here.

On their way in, I believe, are representatives from a number of our lead agencies for children's mental health: Cathy Paul from Kinark's York service area; Humphrey Mitchell from Peel Children's Centre—that's going to be our Peel service area; Claire Fainer from East Metro Youth Services—that's in our Toronto service area, and will be the lead agency for Toronto; Phil Dodd from Keystone Child, Youth and Family Services—that's in the Grey-Bruce service area; Alex Thomson from Lynwood Charlton Centre—that's in the Hamilton service area; and Joanne Sherin from Vanier Children's Services—that's in the Middlesex service area.

All are our initial lead agency reps for children's mental health. I want to thank them for taking on this very important role. And here they are; they're all here now. Wonderful.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** From Courtice, Ontario, I would like to welcome my colleague and friend Councillor Joe Neal from Clarington regional council for wards 1 and 2. Welcome to Queen's Park, Joe.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It is my pleasure to welcome J.P. and Angela Mrochek. They have come all the way to the Legislature from Sudbury in support of my



bill that I'll be introducing, the Protecting Victims of Occupational Disease Act.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I would like to introduce Parween Taheri from Dalewood public school in the District School Board of Niagara, who is at Queen's Park today as part of the 2015-16 Education Minister's Student Advisory Council.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from—I did that last time. Prince Edward—Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** You're slipping, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, I'm getting better.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** You're getting better? Oh, okay.

I would also like to welcome a couple of young people from Prince Edward—Hastings who are members of the Minister's Student Advisory Council. We have Benjamin Bacic, who's from Moira Secondary School in Belleville, and also Esegent Lemma, who is from the Algonquin Catholic school board. She goes to Nicholson Catholic College in Belleville. We welcome them to the Legislature.

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I'm very pleased to welcome to the House today, from my riding of Burlington, Cheryl Woodhead and Barbara Furlan, with whom I had a lovely lunch in the parliamentary restaurant. Welcome to Queen's Park.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I rise today to recognize May as the official Lyme Disease Awareness Month. Yesterday I was pleased to join several people from across this province as we came together to rally the government to get down to business and bring in an action plan to address Lyme disease in Ontario.

I would like to take this moment as well to commend my colleagues: first of all, my colleague from Haldimand—Norfolk on his private member's bill, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, 2014, and I'd also like to thank the member from Algoma—Manitoulin. His passion and his commitment to his constituents suffering from Lyme disease are second to none as well.

I'm pleased to stand with them, but we can't stop at just a rally. I, myself, have a number of individuals in my riding who are struggling with this horrible disease. It's debilitating. I also, just a few weeks ago, attended the Huron-Perth Trappers Association meeting, and at that meeting I met a gentleman from Barrie who, too, is suffering from Lyme disease. We can't spin our wheels any longer. We need an action plan now.

While I recognize the government's support in moving forward on Lyme disease, I hope, again, that we have a realistic timeline so that we can get into action and address this disease that is haunting and causing so many people a lot of stress and heartache.

I want to share with you that I ask this government to put partisan colours aside and implement a strategy in Ontario because it's for the likes of Doris and Lyn and Julie and Marie and Joe. I stand on their shoulders and sincerely ask for action now.

### CORRECTIONAL FACILITY EMPLOYEES

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Today here at Queen's Park was the annual corrections ceremony of remembrance. It was a memorial ceremony for us to remember each and every corrections officer who has died in the line of service. It was a chance for us to pay respect to those who have given their lives to keep the peace and to help keep people safe. It will always be important to remember.

It is also important to appreciate the corrections officers who serve now. While we pay respect to those who have served before them, we must look at the present state of our system and ensure that corrections officers are respected today.

Every day, officers across the province are faced with overcrowding, understaffing and very real and very dangerous health and safety issues that must be addressed. Issues ranging from lack of appropriate safety equipment to mental health challenges create tensions and unsafe working conditions. Fewer resources and more layers of challenges create more opportunities for something to go terribly wrong.

Corrections peace officers do so much to keep us safe. I ask this government: Is the province doing everything necessary to keep them safe?

I was privileged to stand, as the NDP critic for community safety and correctional services, with officers at the memorial. I hope that on our watch we will never see new names added to the list of those who have given their lives in the line of service. In my role, I will work to make officers safer because I know that every day they do the same for our province.

### MOTHER'S DAY

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Members' statements, of course, are an opportunity for us to talk about our home ridings to our own constituents and the people of Ontario. The update I want to give you from Kitchener Centre, my riding, actually is connected to the riding of Willowdale, which is represented by our aboriginal affairs minister. This is where I was born and raised and where my parents still live.

This Sunday is Mother's Day, and many of us will be honouring our mothers and thanking them for their hard work, their dedication and their sacrifices. They teach us so many things.

My mother, Antonietta Vernile, was born in a village in southern Italy during the Depression. She survived war as a child and then, like thousands of others, she moved to Canada as a young parent in search of a better life for her family.

Parents are our first teachers. My mother taught me and my two older sisters the value of putting in a hard day's work; how to grow tomatoes in the backyard; how to make homemade pasta, gnocchi and tomato sauce; and to never put up with an injustice.

There were things that she could not teach us, like how to speak English, because she didn't know herself. She was never able to help us with our school work; she would hover over us, though, insisting that we do our homework. She also insisted that we do our chores and not complain about it.

Mr. Speaker, the mothers of this province and all of Canada, wherever they come from, are our teachers, our guardians and our lifelong supporters. To my mother and all the others, I say: Happy Mother's Day.

#### CONNOR ROSS

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Please join me in congratulating Connor Ross of Bolton, from my riding of Dufferin-Caledon. Connor was the winner of the first-ever Music Monday Anthem Search. His song, *We Are One*, was selected and performed in elementary schools across Canada as part of Music Monday. Music Monday is the single largest event dedicated to raising awareness for music education. Connor's song was selected from over 200 entries, including songs by professionals.

Other notable Canadians who have written songs for Music Monday include Chris Hadfield, Serena Ryder, and Ed Robertson from the Barenaked Ladies. Connor is now part of this illustrious group.

There are some great messages in Connor's song, including how music can serve as a tool to help transform and/or save lives for those with mental illness.

Connor was pleased that his song was selected to be performed across the country. However, he was a bit disappointed that his own school, Mayfield Secondary, couldn't participate since the school is closed as a result of the teachers' strike. To quote Connor, "It was a little bit of a bummer that no one could even go to school that day if they wanted to, but this is mainly for elementary schools anyway so thank goodness they weren't on strike yet."

Once again I'd like to congratulate Connor Ross for this amazing achievement and wish him all the best in his career in music.

1310

#### LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** It's an honour to rise today, as the NDP critic for labour, to speak to workers who are left with no choice but to take action because of this Liberal government's continued cuts, especially in education and health care. Teachers and nurses have flooded my inbox.

On Monday, almost a million students and 73,000 teachers will be affected by strike action next week, as a result of continued education cuts seen by this government's budget.

The Minister of Education claimed today that she and boards were not notified of the details of the ETFO strike for Monday, when in fact those details were received three days ago.

Constituents are angry about this Liberal government wanting to strip collective agreements, reduce teachers' ability to use their professional judgment, and to remove caps to class sizes. Worse, there has been nothing but indifference in this government's response to these disputes.

In my own riding of Welland, health care workers, nurses, members of OPSEU Local 294, have been on strike for more than a month now. The CCAC responsible for contracting to the for-profit CarePartners has not said a peep, nor has the government, about ensuring transparency and accountability for the for-profit agencies that these nurses are working for, despite that I've raised this three times in the Legislature.

Today I stand to highlight the plight of educators and front-line workers who have been left with no choice but to take strike action because of this Liberal government's failures.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today and give special recognition to two really great organizations doing incredible work in Halton. Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre and the Community Youth in Action Network are two organizations that have made significant contributions to so many people's lives. They offer key community support programs, and they're committed to improving education and increasing community engagement for our young people. They recently received grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

I paid a visit recently to see the positive influence of these two groups first-hand. Well, let me tell you, from the moment I walked in, it was clear that the Trillium grants were a huge help. It allowed Oak Park to complete some much-needed renovations, but more importantly, it gave the Community Youth in Action Network the resources that they needed to expand their staff and develop new programming.

During my visit, I got to tour the Oak Park facility, speak with staff and teen volunteers, and even take part in some flowerpot art projects. It was a lot of fun. Watching the smiles on those young people's faces, I could really see how important it was for them to know that there are people out there who support them and care for them. When we help our young people to connect better with their neighbourhoods, we all win.

I can't think of two groups more worthy of this vital funding, and I'm proud that the Ontario Trillium Foundation continues to support such important community-building organizations.

#### CONCORD FOOD CENTRE

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Just this week, on Tuesday, I was there for the opening customer appreciation evening for



Concord Food Centre. It's interesting; where I live, in Thornhill, we have what we know as our little deluxe gem of a grocery store, with what we believe are the best fruits and vegetables in the GTA—I'm not going to get into arguments with some of the agriculture colleagues here—but people who live in downtown Toronto have actually asked me, "Where do you live?" I tell them where I live, and they say, "Oh, my goodness, you live right near Concord Food Centre." So it has obviously got a far-reaching network of customers.

We were there celebrating the newly renovated premises. It's absolutely stunning. I recommend that everybody pay us a visit up in Thornhill. Owner Joe Greco was there, with his managers Terry Cruickshank and Rina Virgilio.

Joe's daughter Danielle was there with her natural, holistic and nutritious little snacks made out of seeds and nuts. She uses maple syrup to sweeten them, and they're absolutely fantastic. Silvana and Bianca—Bianca is the daughter—were there from Cannoli Queens pastry, giving out samples. Alessia was giving out Ritter chocolates. Ralph Eisenberg was serving cake from La Rocca cakes. Camille Marcotte, who is the designer of the new premises, was there as well.

They had every reason to be happy, and the customers are thrilled, but unfortunately there are still plans to bring a rapidway down Centre Street and Bathurst in Thornhill, and we're all very concerned about our local businesses.

#### CANADA-NETHERLANDS FRIENDSHIP DAY

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** On May 2, Burlington celebrated Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day. Burlington has a strong and vital Dutch community whose members continue to contribute significantly to the vitality and prosperity of our city.

In 2010, the former member for Kitchener–Waterloo, who is of Dutch descent, introduced a private member's bill declaring May as Dutch Heritage Month. It passed and is now law. We had the pleasure of welcoming former MPP and minister Elizabeth Witmer to Burlington last Saturday.

This year's celebration was particularly special, as it marked the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands by Canadian Armed Forces. I'm proud to say that my father, Hugh McMahon, was part of that liberating force. His regiment's crest hangs proudly in Apeldoorn city hall.

What made Saturday equally special is that we also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the city of Burlington's twinning with the city of Apeldoorn.

I had the pleasure of visiting Apeldoorn in 2007 with members of our city council and our mundialization committee, also part of city hall. People like Charles Minken, who chairs the Apeldoorn subcommittee, were there on Saturday, and he organized the event.

At city hall, on that day, we heard beautiful performances from the Soli Deo Gloria Choir visiting from Urk,

the Netherlands; the Alexander's Public School band; and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 60 colour guard.

Finally, we were all touched by the stories shared by students at Lester B. Pearson High School. Led by teacher Judith Genis on a recent trip to Apeldoorn, students conducted research on a fallen soldier buried in the Holten Canadian War Cemetery. Part of this meaningful initiative sees the students sharing that story, which is then stored in a permanent collection on display at Holten.

It was an extremely meaningful celebration, and I would like to thank all of those who played a role in organizing this year's Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day. To them, I say dank je wel.

#### BLACKBERRY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Today I rise as a government MPP from Waterloo region to talk about a tech giant in the region. BlackBerry is a prime example of an Ontario success story, of innovators in a new industry and as a homegrown company that today employs over 4,500 workers across Ontario, many of those who live and work in the Waterloo region in my hometown of Cambridge.

BlackBerry is known around the world, and rightly so, as a leader in the smartphone industry. Their enterprise and security software are second to none.

BlackBerry was on the leading edge of the technology and IT sector explosion in Waterloo region, which still benefits the Waterloo region economy and indeed Ontario's economy. It's one of the reasons why the Ontario government has been one of the largest purchasers of BlackBerry products in the world, something I'm extremely proud of.

Since smartphones became ubiquitous, I have only ever used BlackBerry and will only ever use BlackBerry. In fact, I can say with confidence now, I have three of them.

I encourage all four Waterloo region MPPs to avoid negative messages at the expense of a valued Waterloo region business and speak with pride about our homegrown BlackBerry. They continue to contribute and give back immeasurably to our community.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### PROTECTING VICTIMS OF OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE ACT, 2015

##### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DES VICTIMES DE MALADIES PROFESSIONNELLES

Ms. French moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to loss of earnings and

survivor benefits / Projet de loi 98, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne les prestations de survivant.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carries? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Section 43 of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, provides for payments for loss of earnings to a worker where the loss of earnings results from an injury, which includes occupational disease.

The bill addresses the situation of a worker who is no longer working at the time of contracting an occupational disease by providing for loss of earnings to be determined in this case as if the worker had still been working at the time of diagnosis.

1320

Section 48 of the act provides for death benefits to be paid to survivors when a worker dies due to an injury for which the worker would otherwise have been entitled to benefits under the insurance plan. The bill amends that section to address situations where a deceased worker was no longer working at the time of the injury, including at the time of contracting an occupational disease.

The amendments require the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to calculate payments in these situations based on the average earnings of a fully qualified person engaged in the deceased worker's occupation or trade at the time of the diagnosis. The bill also provides for previous determinations of death benefits to be reviewed based on the same criterion.

Speaker, this is a legislative loophole that penalizes victims and their families, and today we have the opportunity to close it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I move to motions, just a reminder that when we do introduce bills, the short statement is supposed to be taken directly from the explanatory notes, with no other editorial comments. That's helpful—we'll have time to debate that, in other words.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The deputy House leader is putting forward a motion without—without notice. I'm having these moments. I'm sorry. Do we agree? Agreed.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item numbers 54, 55, 58 and 59 be waived.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Bradley moves that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g)—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

#### SEMAINE DE LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES ENFANTS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I rise in the House today to recognize Children's Mental Health Week. The first week of May is dedicated to raising awareness of mental health issues and decreasing the stigma for children living with them.

I want to take this opportunity to stand and acknowledge the hard work, caring and understanding of those who love and care for our children and our youth with mental health challenges: their parents, siblings, other family members and friends. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and compassion of our mental health partners, including our mental health lead agencies and Children's Mental Health Ontario, whom I introduced earlier. It's great to have them here in the House with us today. I ask that everyone in the House continue to engage in conversations on mental health issues in recognition of Child and Youth Mental Health Week.

Every child deserves the opportunity to succeed in life. Of course, we're all aware of the statistics that approximately one in five young people in Ontario will deal with mental health issues in his or her lifetime, and 70% of mental health and addiction problems begin in childhood and adolescence—70%.

Les statistiques sont connues : environ un jeune sur cinq en Ontario sera aux prises avec des troubles de santé mentale au cours de sa vie, et 70 % des problèmes de santé mentale et de dépendance commencent durant l'enfance et l'adolescence.

We know that the sooner these young people receive the help and the support they need, the more likely they are to participate in school, lead healthy lives and contribute to their communities. That's why our government and the lead agencies that are here with us today—and the ones to be named later this year—are and will be working hard to strengthen our community-based child and youth mental health systems so that parents and youth will know what mental health services are available in their communities and how to access them.

In 2011, we took action by introducing Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. In the first three years of the strategy, my ministry, together with my colleagues from the Ministries of Education, Health and



Long-Term Care, and Training, Colleges and Universities, made significant progress in providing faster access to quality services, identifying and intervening early, and closing critical service gaps for our children and youth.

Since the launch of the strategy, the province has supported the hiring of 770 new mental health workers, and Ontario's new tele-mental health service is providing more than 2,800 psychiatric consults this year alone to benefit children and youth in rural, remote and under-served communities. We've actually surpassed our target on this year's usage numbers.

Overall, more than 50,000 kids and their families are benefiting from quicker and easier access to the right mental health supports. I'm proud of our strategy's record in the first three years, with its very strong focus on developing healthy young minds in our children and youth.

Although the strategy is shifting to focus on transitioning youth and adults in phase 2 under the capable leadership of my colleague Minister Hoskins, our work for children and youth struggling with mental health issues and our support for their families will not stop. We know there is more work to do.

Through many of our initiatives, including the Moving on Mental Health strategy, we remain fully committed to helping young people reach their full potential in life. Through Moving on Mental Health, our goal is to make sure that families across Ontario will know what mental health services are available in their community and how to access the mental health services and supports that meet their needs.

Par l'entremise de la stratégie « Pour l'avancement de la santé mentale », notre objectif est de faire en sorte que les familles de tout l'Ontario sachent quels services de santé mentale sont disponibles dans leurs collectivités et comment accéder aux services et soutiens en matière de santé mentale permettant de répondre à leurs besoins.

This will help create a mental health system that is stronger and more accountable and responsive to the needs of children, youth and their families. We need to keep talking openly about mental health in our families, in our communities and across the province so we can help change the way society views mental health issues and those living with them.

Our government will continue to take action so that these youth receive the support they need so that they can enjoy the bright futures they deserve and reach their full potential.

#### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Speaker, two days ago, Minister Damerla rose to remind the House that May is South Asian Heritage Month in Ontario. I rise today to let members know that during this month, we also celebrate Asian Heritage Month.

The extraordinary contributions made to our society by Asian newcomers speak for themselves. We can look to the arts, to business, to science and health care, to

education. In all of these areas, Asian immigrants have excelled, and, in the process, they have helped build this province we call Ontario.

Our province is what it is because of the immigrants we have welcomed over the course of our history, and a great many of those have been Asian. Today in Ontario, almost two million people are of Asian descent. This is nearly one in six Ontarians. They contribute to what truly is an ethnic, cultural and religious mosaic, and we are infinitely richer for it.

We're also a much more significant global trade and business force as a result of our diverse and internationally connected population. Every immigrant from Asia holds an important connection to their former home. The success of our two recent trade missions to Asia—one by myself and Minister Leal, the other one by Minister Moridi—is proof again of the opportunities to be found in the vibrant and emerging economies in Asia.

Over the course of the coming weeks, I urge my colleagues and all Ontarians to enjoy the many festivities and celebrations associated with Asian Heritage Month. I urge them to also reflect on how fortunate we are in this province to have different communities we can celebrate, with so many achievements from which we can benefit. Our diversity has truly made Ontario a wonderful place to live, to work and to raise a family. Of course, while it's good to have a designated month in which to acknowledge that blessing, it is something we should all take pride in year-round.

1330

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus to recognize Children's Mental Health Week and the representatives of Children's Mental Health Ontario who have joined us here today in the Legislature.

Half a million children in Ontario suffer from some form of mental health concerns. Children's Mental Health Week is about increasing awareness of these conditions, providing parents and educators the knowledge they need to identify signs of trouble before it is too late, and reminding all members of the community that help and support are available.

Children need action and a focus on front-line services. Through the tireless effort of our health care critic, Christine Elliott, the government finally struck the Select Committee on Developmental Services.

Many support agencies, including ones in my own riding, haven't seen funding increases for years, despite a growing waiting list. Real funding levels have been eroded due to inflation, and the situation will only get worse unless there's a significant change, of course, by this government.

Too often with this Liberal government, we see money wasted in the vast bureaucracy, never getting to the front-

line workers or the people in need. Without proper, reliable funding, many support services will have to close, sending children to the emergency room and letting their conditions deteriorate.

Too many children and families are waiting for support services, losing valuable time that could be spent assisting children and preventing their condition from getting worse. Every day on a waiting list is a day that a child can't fulfil their potential at home, at school and in the community. It is a loss for all, and for the province.

We have heard warnings from independent officers of the Legislature that the growing debt servicing costs will crowd out essential government services. As legislators, we must work tirelessly to ensure this doesn't happen. We can't let bad economic management deprive our children and families in need of the support services that can save their lives and help them thrive at such an important stage in their development.

### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I rise today to recognize May as Asian Heritage Month. It's with great pleasure that I greet you, or try to greet you, in some of the native tongues of almost two million Ontarians. Namaste. Sat sri akal. Annyong haseyo. Kumustá. Nin hão. Lay ho ma. Ohayo-gozaimasu.

We are incredibly fortunate to reside in a harmonious province with a level of diversity and tolerance simply unparalleled anywhere else on the planet. Whether we are in the community, at our jobs, in our homes or among our friends and family, we do not simply tolerate diversity; we celebrate it.

Ontario is home to two million Ontarians of Asian heritage who have made incredible contributions to the social and economic fabric of our province. In the fields of culture, technology, innovation and commerce, we owe these tireless citizens incredible thanks for leading our economy into the knowledge era of the 21st century.

The diversity of these communities in culture, religion, profession and every other aspect of human life is nothing short of astounding and truly showcases Ontario as the world capital of harmony and respect.

Some may trace their roots in Ontario to the years prior to 1900, in which racism and hostility were the norm rather than the exception. Despite these challenges, brave individuals refused to allow ignorance to detour them and quickly became prominent members of their communities. Others are more recent arrivals, yet whether coming last month or in the last decade, these people have integrated seamlessly into our way of life, enrich the communities in which they live and demonstrate a commitment to civic participation.

I just want to mention a few individuals whom I'm friendly with and I have a lot of respect for. One is York region resident Soon Young Lee. She's a member of both the Korean Community Federation of Canada and the For You Telecare Family Service, two organizations that work to assist new Canadians in finding success in em-

ployment and commerce, and harmony in daily life. Soon Young has helped many Korean Canadians integrate, and she was here just yesterday for the Queen's Park day to promote counselling for at-risk families with Family Service Ontario.

I'd also be remiss if I didn't mention Erlinda Insigne. She's the president of the Filipino-Canadian Association of Vaughan, and has raised funds for various endeavours, such as Typhoon Yolanda relief. She has also worked very hard to promote a community centre near where I live, the Patricia Kemp Community Centre, as a centre of activity for her community.

Regardless of when these people have arrived, these communities have made an intense and incredible contribution to the entire province, and no Ontarian is untouched. We celebrate their efforts and smile, knowing that their contributions will continue for generations to come.

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** On behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats, I'm proud to stand with Ontarians today in celebrating Children's Mental Health Week. Children's mental health has not been given its rightful priority in our health system. The ripple effects of this can be seen in our emergency rooms, our community clinics and, over the long term, in our courts and our justice system.

The Children's Mental Health Ontario report indicates that we are failing, and at this rate we are heading for a systemic crisis. This year alone, 6,000 kids are waiting more than one full year for service, and that could double to 12,000 by next year.

The good news is that the stigma is on the decline, which means that services are on the rise. Without additional funding or proper streamlining of services, child and youth mental health centres won't be able to provide the needed care.

It doesn't have to be this way. It is estimated that 70% of childhood mental health issues can be solved with early intervention and therapy. Our children and youth—our province's most valuable assets—deserve better. Like good physical health, mental health is an essential part of being able to lead a happy life and to grow up happy, healthy, productive adults. This is something every parent wants for their child, and something every child in our country deserves.

The community-based agencies that are the backbone of Ontario's mental health system for children and youth also deserve the necessary supports to be able to deliver the critically needed services.

On behalf of my NDP colleagues, I'd like to thank Children's Mental Health Ontario for this year's important report card. I'd also like to recognize the countless other agencies, front-line staff, dedicated professionals and volunteers across our province who continue to do excellent care with limited resources for our youth.

I'd also like to recognize my colleague, MPP Teresa Fanshawe, who has tabled a bill that will go to second



reading this afternoon. If passed, it will address the lack of uniformity in access to and delivery of services and treatments across Ontario. Bill 95 would streamline fragmented programs, regulate the sector and give the Ombudsman oversight authority to provide more accountability and transparency.

### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It is my pleasure today to rise on behalf of the Ontario NDP in recognition of Asian Heritage Month.

I am glad that across Ontario there is recognition for the many contributions of the Asian community in our province. Of course, Asia is vast and varied, encompassing many diverse peoples, including those of Korean, Tibetan, Vietnamese, Japanese and Chinese heritage.

The history of the Asian—particularly Chinese—contribution to this country is a long, proud and sometimes sorrowful one, Speaker.

As mentioned in my remarks on South Asian Heritage Month, Canadians of Asian heritage make up more than five million, or 16%, of the population. Nearly half of these are Chinese.

I'll take a minute to single out the contributions and storied history of Chinese migrants to this province. The impact that the Chinese community has had is unmistakable, especially in the greater Toronto area, with one of the world's greatest and largest Chinatowns—the original one, at least in Ontario, in the Spadina corridor of the city. Now, of course, the Chinese community is prevalent throughout the GTA, in Markham and across the province. Tourists come from all around the world to spend time in this historic neighbourhood.

Of the most spoken languages in Canada are the various Chinese dialects. That should tell us something about the impact this community has had.

We should, however, recognize that the hard work of Chinese Canadians was first brought about by a painful chapter of relying on the labour of Chinese migrants to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. That really was such a huge part of connecting what we know as Canada today. It came at a terrible cost. Every Canadian since should acknowledge this past.

1340

Today, Chinese and other Asian Ontarians' contributions to every aspect of our lives can be felt throughout the GTA and clear across the province, from business to the arts. We note that this government has recently taken steps to cement a further relationship to Asia through trade. New Democrats join with other parties in recognizing the vital Asian-Canadian contributions to this province.

### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Speaker, I'd like to correct my record. I meant to say, "the good news is that the stigma is on the decline, which means demand for services is on

the rise." I also called the member from London—Fanshawe "Teresa Fanshawe"; it's Teresa Armstrong.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member is correct to correct her own record.

A point of order, the member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I have a point of order: I mentioned the Select Committee on Developmental Services; I meant to say "the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions." She was involved with both, and that's what I meant.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. That is also a point of order, and you can correct your own record.

I thank all members for their statements.

### PETITIONS

#### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Whereas the billion-dollar gas plants cancellation, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020; and

"Whereas the Liberal government wasted \$2 billion on the flawed smart meter program; and

"Whereas the recent announcement to implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program will see average household hydro bills increase an additional \$137 per year starting in 2016; and

"Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

"Whereas home heating and electricity are a necessity for families in Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario's power consumers, including families, farmers and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity."

I support this petition and give it to page Thomas to take to the table.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from Dolores Roberts. She lives in my riding in Val Caron. It reads as follows:

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ... to mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask good page Mira to bring it to the Clerk.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I agree with the petition, affix my signature and give it to Olivia to bring down.

### DEMONSTRATION AT QUEEN'S PARK

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"With great urgency we write to call public attention to the repeated demand of a group of public citizens to stage a demonstration of a deeply offensive and deplorable nature on the grounds of Queen's Park;

"The Al-Quds Day tradition was initiated in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini to endorse and promote a fundamentalist strain of Islam as well as the hatred and destruction of both the Israeli state and the Jewish people. In recent years, rallies have occurred across the globe, including in a number of cities in North America. Organizers and attendees chant slogans that perpetuate these obscene sentiments and wave placards and flags that signify the banned terrorist organization Hamas;

"Regretfully, Al-Quds Day has been celebrated for several years on the grounds of the provincial Legislature, the very institution that acts to protect the rights and dignity of each and every single Ontarian, regardless of religion, creed, orientation or ancestry;

"Although the spirit of Queen's Park seeks to encourage and foster healthy democratic discussion and debate, we, the undersigned, believe a gathering of such a reprehensible nature and blatantly racist ideology should not be permitted on the grounds of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario nor the premises of any provincial or federal institution."

I am affixing my name to this petition and giving it to Jae Min.

### FIRST RESPONDERS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to present this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads:

"Whereas emergency response workers (paramedics, police officers, and firefighters) confront traumatic events on a nearly daily basis to provide safety to the public; and

"Whereas many emergency response workers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of their work; and

"Whereas Bill 2 'An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder' sets out that if an emergency response worker suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, the disorder is presumed to be an occupational disease that occurred due to their employment as an emergency response worker, unless the contrary is shown;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to unanimously endorse and quickly pass Bill 2 'An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder'."

I absolutely agree with this petition, will affix my signature to it and send it to the Clerks' table through page Carina.

### GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, with over 600 signatures.



"Whereas the residents of the municipality of Clarington have been promised that the GO train would be extended to Courtice and Bowmanville;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario keep its promise to Clarington residents and commit to providing the necessary funding for Metrolinx to complete the extension of the GO train to Courtice and Bowmanville no later than 2018."

I agree with this petition, and I will affix my name to it and give it to page Megan.

#### ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Liberal government has brought forward a payroll tax in the form of a mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP); and

"Whereas the Liberal government has not conducted nor released a cost-benefit analysis of this new payroll tax; and

"Whereas internal Ministry of Finance documents show that the Liberals are aware that the ORPP will increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and kill jobs in the province; and

"Whereas a McKinsey and Co. survey shows that more than four out of every five Canadians already save enough for their retirement; and

"Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has stated that a majority of its members would have to lay off workers; and

"Whereas the government's plan would force the cancellation of many existing retirement plans that have better employer contribution rates; and

"Whereas low-income earners will have their retirement savings clawed back under this scheme; and

"Whereas Ontarians cannot afford another tax on top of their already skyrocketing hydro bills and ever-increasing cost of living;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of an Ontario pension tax."

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature to give it to page Thomas.

1350

#### SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I have a petition to maintain the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre annually helps about 2,500 children with physical, neurological and developmental challenges;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is an exceptional program administered by expert faculty and staff that offers youth and their

families a transformative experience that they would not receive in a less specialized setting;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program faces a shortfall in provincial funding;

"Whereas families raising children with special needs incur increased costs for care which the income test does not properly reflect;

"Whereas compliance with the provincial requirements means that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is unable to be sustained;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program closure will mean a loss of a valued skill set of expertise from teachers and support staff in our community that will leave some of the area's most vulnerable children and families without proper child care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To make up any funding shortfalls that result from transitioning to a fee subsidy model so that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program can remain operational and consider changes to the income test to better reflect the increased costs families raising children with special needs incur."

I support this, will sign my name to it and give it to page Ishika.

#### STUDENT SAFETY

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Joshua.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas repeated cuts to health care funding under the present government are having a negative impact on the residents of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, including seniors, diabetics and those suffering from eye or cardiovascular conditions; and

"Whereas the heart rehabilitation program at the Seaway Valley Health Centre provided a valuable service for many residents; and

"Whereas it is in everyone's interests to help all Ontarians stay healthy and prevent the occurrence of acute and dangerous conditions, such as heart failure; and

"Whereas this interest is best served through adequate funding to programs that have proven their value;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take all necessary action to restore the heart rehab program at the Seaway Valley Health Centre."

I agree with this petition and will be passing it off to page Olivia.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from the people of Sudbury and the northeast. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of beds on the surgical unit, cuts to vital patient support services including hospital cleaning, and more than 87,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year to be cut from departments across the hospital, including in-patient psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical units, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care and the emergency department; and

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect the beds and services;

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Afiyah to bring it to the Clerk.

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

"Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto (Beaches-East York and Toronto-Danforth) and those numbers continue to grow; and

"Whereas there is no French secondary school (grades 7-12) yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east

Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

"Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

"Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

"Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that '... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto'; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; and

"Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space for a French-language secondary school in east Toronto;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school (grades 7-12) in the community by September 2015, so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live."

J'affixe ma signature et donne la pétition à page Ethan.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN ONTARIO ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DES SERVICES DE SANTÉ MENTALE ET DE LUTTE CONTRE LES DÉPENDANCES EN ONTARIO

Ms. Armstrong moved second reading of the following bill:



Bill 95, An Act to continue the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council and to amend the Ombudsman Act in respect of providers of mental health and addictions services / *Projet de loi 95, Loi visant à proroger le Conseil consultatif pour le leadership en santé mentale et en lutte contre les dépendances et à modifier la Loi sur l'ombudsman à l'égard des fournisseurs de services de santé mentale et de lutte contre les dépendances.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation. The member for London-Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today for the second reading of my private member's bill, the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015. For me, the introduction of this bill is very personal and dear to my heart.

As many members here may know, there was a deadly fire that broke out in an apartment building in London, Ontario, last year. The needless tragedy revealed a serious gap in safe, affordable housing for our province's homeless, addicted, disabled and mentally ill people. In this particular case, a 72-year-old man, David MacPherson, died of injuries from the blaze and another person was injured.

What has been happening in London, Speaker, highlights the deficiencies in the mental health system. In another case, a young man spent five days in an emergency department, in the isolation room. His family told reporters that he was scraping his hands against the walls until his knuckles bled and was summarily discharged after only a week of treatment in the psychiatric ward. In another case, at the Victoria Hospital, six mentally ill patients were left for 20 hours and resorted to sleeping on the floor.

1400

London's news outlets continue to report on the city's shrinking psychiatric hospitals and beds: 138 beds were moved to Windsor, Kitchener, St. Thomas and Hamilton; 70 beds were cut with cash that was shifted to provide care in the community. These reductions left London hospitals with the capacity to treat only 156 patients.

I know that London isn't the only major city whose hospitals have been clogged with mental health patients due to chronic underfunding. It's happening throughout this province, and the intention of this bill is to take the necessary steps toward addressing those problems.

When I shared my concerns about what was happening in London with my colleague from Nickel Belt, the critic for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, she too was concerned about what was happening and told me stories about things that happened in her community. She also brought to light the select committee that originated here in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. She talked about the report that the select committee had done—because the member from Nickel Belt sat on that committee. That report was named the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions in Ontario report for 2010.

At that point, I read the report. It was surprising, the number of deputations that went into the making of that report. More than 300 individuals and organizations gave deputations, with more submitting written reports along the way. The final report represented more than 18 months of work by the members of all parties.

I want to take a moment to thank everyone who contributed to this report. This definitely was not a partisan issue, Speaker. All parties had a hand in the work and a hand in the report-writing. It was a very well-written report, I must say. Congratulations to everyone who did all that work. It's really humbling to read that report and to know the dedication that each member put into coming up with some very well-thought-out recommendations and solutions to some of the problems, barriers and access pieces we have in mental health.

What they achieved together was a clear vision forward for mental health and addiction services in Ontario. It is my intention to see that effort compensated by driving the recommendations of the committee forward. More than that, it is time for Ontarians who are suffering from mental illness and addictions to access the treatments they need to heal.

The prevalence and incidence of poor mental health is staggering. One in five Canadians will experience a mental health illness in their lifetime. The remaining four will have a friend, family member or colleague who will have experienced mental health illness. Mental illness affects thinking, mood or behaviour, and can be associated with distress and/or impairment of functioning, with symptoms that vary from mild to severe. Schizophrenia affects 1%; major depression impacts 8%; and anxiety disorder 12% of people.

Who are those affected most by mental illness and addiction? Some 70% of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to report mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders than any other age group. Women were one and a half times more likely to meet the criteria for mood or anxiety disorder than men. Canadians in the lowest income group were three to four times more likely than those in the highest income group to report fair to poor mental health.

Yet the real problems with mental health illness and addictions can be found in access to services, or lack thereof. Public confidence and trust in the mental health system is vital, yet too many Ontarians are going without the supports they need. Only one third of those who need mental health services in Canada actually receive them, and 71% of family physicians ranked access to psychiatrists in Ontario fair to poor. While mental illnesses constitute more than 15% of the burden of disease in Canada, these illnesses receive only 5.5% of our health care dollars.

Despite access to service, one of the greatest barriers to achieving good mental health is the stigma associated with it. We did talk about how the stigma is getting better; it's being slowly eroded, and that's a good thing. Only 50% of Canadians would tell friends or co-workers

that they have a family member with mental illness, compared to 72% who would discuss a diagnosis of cancer—or 68%, diabetes—in the family. Quite simply, the numbers are not good.

In tough economic climates, these are the services that often see funding cuts or freezes. I appeal to the members of the chamber that we simply cannot afford not to fund mental health services and addictions appropriately in this province. We have to make sure that funding is there and stable.

There is an overwhelming financial cost to society and our economy for being short-sighted in this regard. In Canada, mental illness is the second leading cause of human disability and premature death. Every day, 500 Canadians are absent from work due to psychiatric problems. Mental health is the number one cause of disability in Canada, accounting for nearly 30% of disability claims and 70% of the total costs. Some \$51 billion is the estimated cost of mental illness to Canadian society in terms of health care and lost productivity; \$34 billion of that represents the cost of mental illness and addictions to Ontario's economy. In many respects, passing this bill should be a done deal, so to speak, as I am seeking to implement the work that all parties in this House have already agreed to. It is even based upon a proven model of success: Cancer Care Ontario.

The first recommendation of the report of the select committee is to bring all mental health and addiction services and programs under one umbrella organization. Currently, mental health and addiction services are spread across more than 12 ministries, and there is no coherent system for the delivery of all mental health and addiction services in the province. Community care is delivered by 440 children's mental health agencies, 330 community mental health agencies, 150 substance abuse treatment agencies and approximately 50 problem-gaming centres. In other words, this lack of cohesion in the mental health system prevents us from gaining a clear picture of all mental health services in the province.

We know this sector is underfunded and resources are scarce. Therefore, we must ensure that they are used to their full capacity for the benefit of all Ontarians. But most importantly, it's difficult for people who need these services to easily access them. That's what's happening. It does become very difficult to try to find your way to access services when you don't know where they are and who's offering them. Having this bill with one umbrella organization will help coordinate and designate some of those services so that people are aware of them.

This bill is entirely about helping all vulnerable Ontarians by ensuring they have access to programs and services, regardless of age or where they live in the province. That's another thing under the umbrella recommendations; they talk about children and youth services also being under one ministry. We've heard that children and youth talk about transitioning from mental health services to adult services. It isn't a smooth process.

My offices reached out to a diverse group of stakeholders, and the feedback we received has been quite

positive, for the most part. We believe that this bill is a good first step in the right direction. It represents a tremendous amount of collaboration within the mental health sector; however, we also know that there is much more work to be done.

I want to take a moment to recognize the efforts of all those working and providing mental health and addiction services throughout Ontario, from the front-line workers who are seeing increased mental health cases with not enough training—as is the case with our police, correctional officers, personal support workers and nurses—to the organizations that are dedicated to providing the research and the expertise, for example, the Ontario Peer Development Initiative, Children's Mental Health Ontario, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, Alzheimer Society and all the other employees who make a difference in the lives of those with mental health and addictions.

Lastly, I want to speak to those Ontarians who are in need of mental health supports. The good news is, mental health issues can be managed and overcome. The sooner you get help, the quicker you can heal. I pledge to continue working towards making sure that the services you need are available to you, the people in Ontario—the services that people need in Ontario. I know that people in the Legislature are very dedicated and conscious of mental health services and addiction, and I know that we're going to continue that work and to make things better.

Having this bill come forward today is the right thing to do. It's a good first step into getting the coordination of mental health services under one home, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It's extremely important. People have come to the committee when it was taking deputations and they were very passionate about what they needed. It's incumbent upon us to listen to the voices of Ontarians and to help them along with this legislation.

1410

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Han Dong:** I'm very pleased to speak to this private member's bill, introduced by the member from London—Fanshawe. In spirit, I agree with the bill. I think it's very necessary to address some of the demand that we've been facing in the last little while in the mental health and addiction area.

I would also like to remind the House that this government has been doing a lot of good work on this front. Last year, we announced the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, which brings together experts and patients from across Ontario who have lived through the experience. This council will serve as a central body to identify issues across and within the mental health and addictions system and will advise us on ways to resolve these issues.

Personally, last winter I remember that I made a statement in this House with regard to the opening of the new Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan Emergency



Department at CAMH on College Street, not too far from where I live. CAMH has been doing fantastic work. We've been very supportive of CAMH, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, as you know. They've gone through quite a bit of revitalization, and as I said, they've been doing good work not just in the riding of Trinity-Spadina but for all Ontarians.

I want to speak about this new emergency department, which the province has contributed \$4.2 million to as part of this \$220-million-over-three-years project. I believe that's the only emergency department that is available right now, because they've seen tremendous growth in demand—I believe it's somewhere around 70% or 75%—between 2006 and 2014.

The member is correct: One in five Ontarians will experience some degree of mental health illness in their lifetime. Many of us are deeply touched by this issue, so we've got to tackle this right away. I'm pretty proud of the government's initiative in the last little while, not only in recognizing that this is a major challenge for Ontarians and the Ontario government, but also in coming up with innovative ways to deal with it. We know it's a complex issue, and it requires complex solutions. I'm happy that different ministries are working together to find a solution to tackle this.

I agree with the spirit of this bill. I look forward to supporting this bill, but I also want to get on the record that this government has been doing a lot of work addressing mental health and addiction issues.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to rise to speak in support of the member from London—Fanshawe's private member's Bill 95. I have to give her full points, because she has done something that the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions was unable to do. As a member of that committee, we spent a good deal of time in the last part of our deliberations trying to figure out, after we'd done all this fabulous work, how we then ensure that the report doesn't just get filed. By bringing forward Bill 95, you have essentially encapsulated the recommendations that we collectively—I really want to remind people of that, because all of us who were on that committee know very intimately how involved each of us was. It was a commitment of 18 months that we all made. I don't actually recall anybody subbing out at any point. We were all there because we wanted to be there. We saw challenges in our community and wanted to make changes. And we all participated in the recommendations. They were all consensus-based.

So, congratulations to you for putting it into a bill. The select committee was able to look at many, many different issues and ministries, but one thing we couldn't do, short of the last recommendation, which I think essentially said that in two years the government has to pull back the report and review the recommendations—we couldn't do. So I'm happy to support it.

You know, I will acknowledge that the report hasn't been filed. People have talked about it. It is much more

out of the shadows, so to speak. Many more corporate initiatives are occurring. Many more government initiatives are happening that are truly making a difference in the lives and family members who are trying to support someone who has a mental illness or addiction.

I will give a little credit where credit is due, but the number one recommendation we made, and spent a lot of time on, was bringing all of these services together, making sure that whether you live in London or Kenora or Orangeville or Ottawa, you are going to know very definitively what kind of services are provided.

When you get a cancer diagnosis, it doesn't matter if you're 30 or three. The Ministry of Health steps up and provides the diagnosis and the treatment. That's all we were saying with mental health. Mental health is an illness. It's not divided by age. It doesn't start or stop at 18 or 21. What we wanted to see with that recommendation was to put it together in the Ministry of Health: Mental health is a health issue, so acknowledge that fact.

There was a lot of discussion because at the time, again, there were issues in the Ministry of Health. There were many things going on, and some concerns were raised about: Well, is the Ministry of Health already too big? Would mental health care and addictions issues once again be pushed to the side because it's such a large ministry and there are so many things going on? At the end of the day, again, as a consensus, we decided that, no, it was more important to acknowledge that it is a health problem.

Part of the stigma that you hear about, and the reason there is a stigma with mental health and addictions issues, is in fact because people think you can suck it up and move on: "Go for a walk, and you'll get better." You know what? Life is not like that, and mental health isn't like that.

For us to say in a very clear, legislative way, "Put it into health because it is a health care issue," was a very conscious decision that we did. I think we deliberated on it for quite some time before we came to that conclusion.

I just want to say: Well done for figuring out how to take this report and put it into a legislative process, so we can move on and actually continue to move the issue forward. One of the benefits of legislation is that you have the ability to pull it out and say, "Are you following it? Are you maintaining it? Is it happening?" We do that with legislation. We have that ability. If we had Bill 95 on the books, so to speak—even in committee—it would allow us to once again pull forward and say, "Absolutely."

There are some things that have happened in the last number of years that have been good news for people who have mental health issues or families who are supporting those individuals. But it also allows us to say, "Where can we do more? Where are the gaps in the system?" Without a doubt, there is no one in this chamber who can say that all the gaps have been filled. We still have stories of people waiting for assistance who are going far too far away from their home community and that peer support to look for services. We have an

opportunity here to make that easier and accessible for all, and so I'm happy to support Bill 95 and wish you all the best.

1420

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** It's truly a privilege for me, as MPP for London West, to be participating in second reading debate on this important legislation, the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act. I really want to congratulate the member for London—Fanshawe for bringing this bill forward. I am very proud to be her colleague, not just in the NDP caucus but as a representative of our community of London.

This is an issue that is critically important for Londoners, and the member for London—Fanshawe knows this and is taking action on pushing this issue forward. It's hard to imagine another community in this province that has been as directly affected by the crisis in mental health as London. Last year, we heard from the London police that there has been a 40% increase in calls over one year in dealing with mental illness, and this comes at a cost of \$14 million, which is 15% of the police budget. What should be a health care issue is becoming a policing issue. This not only has significant financial implications but also enormous personal costs to the dignity and the health and well-being of the person who is experiencing a mental health crisis. Certainly, there's no question that police need training to understand mental illness and to understand how to respond appropriately to someone who is in crisis, but it makes no sense to have police as front-line mental health workers.

When the pre-budget hearings were held in London just a couple of months ago, in January, we learned that London Health Sciences Centre is running at 114% capacity every day for acute-care mental health patients. On any given day, you can walk into the ER and see up to 14 patients waiting for an in-patient bed. In December, over the holidays, we know that Victoria Hospital was at 125% capacity because of people facing mental health emergencies. As the member for London—Fanshawe mentioned, just last March, we learned of patients with mental illness who were forced to wait 20 hours or more at Victoria Hospital and ended up sleeping on the floor because of chronic overcrowding. So ER has become the default for mental health and addictions because people don't know where else to go in the community for services.

Those who are discharged often don't get the supports they need, and that has resulted in the tragic death of a Londoner, David MacPherson, who was living in a substandard, unregulated rooming house. He died in a tragic fire, completely unsupported by any community agencies.

That's why this bill is so important. It will bring together in a single umbrella organization the hundreds of agencies that provide mental health services currently administered by 10 different ministries. It will bring

some much-needed coordination and coherence to the system. Frankly, right now, we don't have a system of mental health services in this province, and that is what Bill 95 will do. The recommendation to create this agency was the first recommendation of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, but from it flowed all of the other recommendations of the report.

Before I close, I want to quickly mention the final recommendation. I met with a group of families—parents who support adult children with mental health issues—in my community of London, and what was critically important to them was the recommendation about the need for changes to the Personal Health Information Protection Act so that family members can be involved in treatment plans and discharge strategies for their loved ones. I'm just going to read what they said: "As the ones who continually have to pick up the pieces of our family members, we feel we have valuable information that should be integral in the treatment plan of our loved one. In the regular health care system, as opposed to the mental health system, caregivers have access to the patient's health problems and their treatment plan, and are often asked to take a very active role in the patient's recovery."

This legislation will address that gap. I congratulate, once again, the member for bringing this forward. Let's all support it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I rise with pleasure today to speak on Bill 95, on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge.

I've had a long history, in my career as a nurse, working with patients with mental health and addiction issues, as a pediatric nurse, critical care nurse and, most recently, working for the community care access centre. I saw all kinds of individuals, from every walk of life and from every age group, suffering from these things.

The reason we talk about mental health and addictions together in the same sentence is because they are so connected. Those with mental health issues sometimes fall into an addiction type of pattern, which is a severe health risk for them; and those who become addicted then end up with mental health issues. It's why we combine them in the same sentence.

In my work as a nurse, knowing how many individuals suffer from these kinds of illnesses, over the years—it has only really recently become such an issue across so many sectors. There has been, certainly, much broader and larger focus on these Ontarians who suffer from mental health and addictions issues, which is actually a good thing.

I also was privileged to sit on the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council for some years. This is a council whose mission, with three pillars at one time, is to really focus on addressing the root causes of crime in our community, poverty reduction, alienation and a number of things. But it came to light, with so many of our partners around the table from police services, education,



youth services and senior services, across many, many sectors—that really identified the fact that mental health and addictions issues cost us all across many, many sectors. So at that point, a few years ago, the crime prevention council added a fourth pillar, mental health and addictions, to start more intensive work on that particular file.

It's interesting that across all sectors, I think, we're now seeing the need for increased mental health awareness and also more services.

I did want to lend my support to Bill 95, but I also recognize that the Ontario government is doing many things to already address some of the things that we're talking about here.

For instance, I know that a single provincial coordinating body, as proposed in Bill 95, would not recognize the diversity of local needs. Health care services, as we know, are best managed at the local level, where they can be delivered and properly integrated into the community. I certainly learned about the diversity in my own community of Cambridge and, indeed, Waterloo region, through my work at the crime prevention council—to find out that our needs in our local area were sometimes very different across the province.

We also recognize that one in five Ontarians experience mental health illnesses in their lifetime. It's also why our government created a comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy, which I'm proud of, to support Ontarians, from childhood to old age, with mental health and addictions problems.

Speaker, as I said, I'm supportive of Bill 95, but I think it could duplicate some of the work that my ministry is already doing. Last year, we announced the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, which brings together experts and patients with lived experiences across Ontario. I know from personal experience how valuable that is at a committee table and for some of our leaders to learn about first-hand, to be able to tailor the programs to those who really need the services.

The council will provide advice on the strategy's investments, promote collaboration across the sectors and report annually on the strategy's progress. The council also serves as a central body to identify the issues across and within the mental health and addictions system, and advises us on ways to resolve these issues.

I also want to point out in my last few minutes that the council also promotes collaboration across the 15 ministries that deliver supports to people with mental health or addictions issues, something that I'm very proud our government is doing.

1430

In conclusion, as I said, I thank the member from London-Fanshawe for bringing forward a very important issue. I know she has done a lot of work on Bill 95, and certainly I support it in spirit. I also know that I'm proud that we are continuing to work on this file.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** The member from this side of the House was talking about this report. I think she was a little shy. I just want to mention that there were members from all parties who worked for about 18 months to put together this report. I'm sorry to say that I didn't know about it until today, because it came up before I was elected, but I look forward to reading it and seeing some, many or possibly all of its suggestions being implemented by this Legislature.

We've been talking a lot about mental health, and I've noticed that we haven't spoken very much on the part of the bill that's focusing on addictions. Sometimes we hear of what's called an addictive personality. I always found that challenging in my work as an optometrist. I used to feel that I wasn't adequately prepared in my university program for the fact that—we all know that people have different personalities and personality quirks, but often-times you're seeing patients, and you don't know if people have mental illness, and you're being a little bit of a detective trying to figure it out. As an optometrist, you don't know if people have addictions—whether it's legal drug addictions, illegal drug addictions or something else entirely—that are causing them to have visual problems. People have red eyes, people have dry eyes—people have all kinds of problems with their eyes, and you often feel a little bit lost in terms of how to commence that discussion.

I think it's something that we have to teach not just the health care professionals and the teachers in our communities, but all of us. It needs to involve all of us—parents, siblings, friends and neighbours—to think in the back of our heads of what we can do to support people in our communities and in our families and help them deal with possible mental health problems, but also that addictive personality, to kind of catch people before they get into trouble.

This week, we've heard a lot about children's mental health. There have been some fantastic events going on in communities all around the GTA and Ontario. Just on Monday, I was with some members of the Legislature at a fantastic event. It was highlighting some videos done by youth in our communities—high school students, university students—who work to get kids to have an understanding of mental health. Maybe that's where it all has to begin, just like we've learned that by getting kids to understand the dangers of smoking, we prepare ourselves for the next generation to be healthier. That's what we also have to do with mental health: to get kids to understand what mental health challenges are, that it's an illness; not to stigmatize people, not to bully people and to be supportive and understanding.

I really want to congratulate the winning team for their "Will You Be There?" video. It was a group of high school students, interestingly enough. They really had a very emotional video. The hashtag, if you want to look for some of the comments and videos and links, is #ChangetheView2015. There's a website, [thenewmentality.ca](http://thenewmentality.ca). Jasmine from The New Mentality: It's "a network promoting youth engagement in mental

health and reducing the stigma of mental illness.” She’s so welcoming, and you can see why the kids want to work with her and work on these projects.

There are events going on that we can attend, and that’s wonderful. We’re all invited to events, but there’s so much more that we can do, as legislators, in our community in terms of promoting awareness and ending the stigma. I think that maybe we’re sometimes part of the problem and not enough of the solution when we don’t write about it in the columns we sometimes write for our local paper, when we don’t talk about the anxiety and the panic attacks we go through during an election campaign—which can be very stressful, as you know.

There’s the “What’s Up” Walk-In Clinic in Toronto. It’s open five days a week for mental health counselling. It’s a service for children, youth, young adults and families.

At the event that I just mentioned, I spoke to Chris Brown from the East Metro Youth Services, and I invite people to spread the word. That’s what we have our websites for; that’s what we have our social media for: to spread the word, use our constituency offices, call up and get pamphlets from anything that is within walking distance or public transit of our constituency offices. Also, there’s Telehealth and there are phone numbers that people can call and get help.

I also met with the York Centre for Children, Youth and Families. I was really impressed with the dedication and the fact that they reached out to me because, unfortunately, that’s how it has to be done; we’re not always aware of all the groups in our community to interact with. Noreen Lee really highlighted some of the challenges in York region in terms of getting access to mental health support, particularly for youth. Too often, what people tell me is that until you go to an emergency room and a child or teenager or young adult is threatening suicide, you do not get help.

So when we talk about these waiting lists, what do they really mean? They mean that if you just ask your family doctor to refer you to get an appointment, you’re basically never getting seen, pretty much, so either the problem resolves itself or the worst, the unimaginable, happens. So I think we can do better, and I hope that we will do better.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. France Gélinas:** I was the lucky one who got to represent my party, the NDP, on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. We published this report, *Navigating the Journey to Wellness: The Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Ontarians*. The report was published and made public in August 2010. Unfortunately, since 2010, not much has changed. So I congratulate my colleague from London—Fanshawe for bringing forward our first recommendation.

The issue is so simple, although we spent a ton of time on it: 18 months, 230 deputants. We went to Toronto, Windsor, St. Thomas, Hamilton, Kingston, Ottawa, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. We visited Weeneebayko on

the James Bay coast. We went to fly in-only reserves. We really reached out to and visited a lot of best practices in mental health and addiction that exist right here in Ontario. We put all of this knowledge together in an 18-page document; 18 pages is what we have, and it’s the way forward.

Our first recommendation, and the one that is included in the member from London—Fanshawe’s bill, is the most important one: It is to give mental health and addiction a home. It is to create an agency whose responsibility will be to cut across the 13 different ministries who presently have bits and pieces of mental health. The sad thing, Speaker—and you would very well know this—is that when they came and presented at committee, most of those ministries would say, “Yes, we do this, but take it away. We would be really, really happy if somebody else could do this and not us.” I can still remember the people from corrections saying that, yes, they do have all of those inmates that have mental health issues, and they needed help. The budget that they had allocated to that was not working.

So we took all of this, and we were able to summarize it into 18 pages and 23 recommendations, where the number one recommendation is to create Mental Health and Addictions Ontario. We spent a lot of time going through what the mandate of this organization will be. We’re not trying to create a new ministry; we’re not trying to reinvent the wheel. We’re giving mental health and addiction a home so that somebody has a responsibility to move this important file forward to improve it.

Unfortunately, I’m out of time; I could go on. Please support this important bill.

1440

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** It’s a pleasure of mine to rise today to speak about Bill 95. There’s no question that our government takes the issue of mental health very seriously, and I want to commend the member from London—Fanshawe for bringing this bill forward.

Bill 95 is important, but in many ways it would actually duplicate some of the work our government is already doing. In communities throughout the province, we have allocated significant resources so that patients, their families and caregivers are given access to the care and services they need when they need it. We’ve done this because we know how deeply mental health issues affect Ontario families. As we heard earlier, one in five Ontarians will experience a mental health illness in their lifetime. Nearly everyone, as we all know, will be affected in some way, either directly or indirectly, through a family member, a friend, or a loved one. That’s why our government created a comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy to support Ontarians from childhood to old age with mental health and addictions issues.

Since 2003, funding for mental health and addictions services has increased by over \$506 million to a total of \$1 billion. Just think about it. That is a lot of money.



Why are we doing this? Because we know that there are Ontarians out there who need real support. That's what governments should be doing: giving people support.

Our plan is also to increase funding by \$220 million over three years as we renew our commitment to our mental health and addictions strategy. The first three years were focused on the early years of life and provided more than 50,000 additional children and youth access to mental health and addictions services. Amazing.

In November, we announced our strategy's phase 2. Phase 2 addresses better access, quality and value by focusing on five strategic goals. We will also invest \$16 million over the next three years and work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to create 1,000 new supportive housing units.

Many aspects of Bill 95 mirror the work, as I mentioned, that is already under way in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The purpose of creating an agency like the Mental Health and Addictions Ontario proposed in Bill 95 is already being fulfilled by the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, our local health integration networks, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and our government's patient ombudsman. Finally, the MHALAC promotes collaboration across the 15 ministries delivering supports to people with mental illness or addictions. This is reflective of the diversity of the needs of the people with mental illness or addictions.

Health care services are best managed at the local level, where they can be delivered and properly integrated into the community. This is how we deliver the best care possible to the people of Ontario. We need to remain focused on providing Ontarians with the best care possible. That's why I urge my fellow members to support this bill but to keep in mind that we are doing what's best for the people of this province. Be careful not to create confusion and needless redundancies as we move ahead, but together we will create a great health care system.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** It's a pleasure to be here today to support my friend the MPP from London-Fanshawe with her private member's bill, the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act.

Before being elected, I also had a career as a registered nurse, and I can tell you first-hand what the challenges are that exist for patients and clients in a fragmented health care system. I've seen first-hand the long- and the short-term consequences when patients do not have the care that they need. Finally, as a front-line nurse for many years, I experienced the frustration of those caregivers not being able to deliver the care when it's needed most.

Only one in three Ontarians who need mental health or addiction services actually get it, which means 70% of people actually don't get any care. We can do better, and this bill will do that. It's long overdue and it's a good

step forward. By streamlining these processes under one umbrella and extending oversight to the Ombudsman, it will provide accountability and it will provide the transparency that's needed.

The services currently are spread across 13 ministries, 440 children's agencies, 330 community agencies, 150 substance agencies and 50 gaming agencies.

In my riding of Welland, I was able to talk to a few of those agencies. At RAFT, which supports thousands of youth, I spoke to a support worker. One of the things he raised was the inability to get ODSP for the youth population. With proper supports, he said they could do so much more. They could actually help people maintain housing, and they could do outreach work. He said their clients are subject to arrest because of vagrancy or their actions, and he spoke about the outrageous wait times.

I spoke to Gateway of Niagara, another great organization in my riding. They talked about having created a smaller version of this bill called the Niagara Mental Health and Addictions Charter, built by 65 diverse organizations across the Niagara region: "The charter aims to create a common agenda in Niagara where ... optimal mental health and wellbeing ... is an essential element to be included in the planning as we build a stronger future." Imagine if we were able to do that across the province.

I spoke to the Oak Centre, to Ru Tauro, who is the executive director there. Their program focuses on mental health but in a different way. Rather than traditional mental health services, their focus is on recovery via holistic ways. They focus on clients' strengths versus deficiencies. This year, they're celebrating their 30th anniversary. She also spoke about the larger need for collaboration that should be led through legislation.

I know that these issues are not specific to my riding. Today, the Children's Mental Health Ontario report certainly speaks to how severe the issues are across our province.

I want to close by repeating what the MPP from Nickel Belt had to say: Give mental health a home in this province. It was supported by all in Navigating the Journey to Wellness, the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions report. That report needs to be moved forward. This was, I think, the number one recommendation in that report.

I look forward to having all-party support here in the House today for the member for London-Fanshawe's bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for London-Fanshawe. You have two minutes for a response.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, you heard all the members in the House talk about how important mental health and addictions is, and specifically that it should be identified in the health care ministry. It does need a home. It's the illness that people don't like to talk about; the illness that people feel is something that people do not understand. We've come a long way in our society in bringing mental illness to the forefront, but we have much, much more work to do.

When we were doing a consultation in London last week, students from post-secondary education were at our consultation table. They talked about how mental illness is really something that is becoming a very large issue in post-secondary education, and how services—access to health on campus—are really pitiful. What they did was that they took it upon themselves—students are so creative and such innovators—and went around to seven other post-secondary education facilities to find out what they had to offer, so that they could have best practices at Western University.

This is what this bill is asking the Legislative Assembly to do: Have an umbrella organization so that all services can be encompassed under one ministry, and that umbrella organization can coordinate and manage and look at duplication and efficiencies to make sure it works for the people who need those services; that it works for mental health patients and for people who have addictions, and they're not lost and just flying in the wind, wondering where to go. "Do I go to the hospital? Do I go to a community health centre? Do I call 911?"

This is why this bill is extremely important. This is not a duplication of mental health. This is a solution to help the Ministry of Health find ways—clear paths—to get treatment for mental health patients and addictions.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We'll take the vote at the end of private members' business.

SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITIES  
ACT (FENTANYL PATCH FOR PATCH  
RETURN POLICY), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR PROTÉGER  
NOS COLLECTIVITÉS  
(POLITIQUE D'ÉCHANGE  
DE TIMBRES DE FENTANYL)

Mr. Fedeli moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 33, An Act to reduce the abuse of fentanyl patches / Projet de loi 33, Loi visant à réduire l'abus de timbres de fentanyl.

1450

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker. Before I address the details of Bill 33, I'd first like to say that it's my firm belief that any time we can do something in this House that can literally save lives, we should do so. I stated that when we debated the Hawkins Gignac Act on carbon monoxide detectors, which is now law, and I firmly believe that the Safeguarding our Communities Act (Fentanyl Patch for Patch Return Policy) will do likewise.

Drugs are killing people throughout our province and in our cities. I want to read you an email I received from Sherry Albert of New Liskeard shortly after I introduced Bill 33 last fall. She wrote the following:

"Dear Sir,

"I am writing to express my gratitude for your undertaking of this initiative. In 2011, I lost my 19-year-old son to this tragic abuse of medication. He was a gentle young man with many plans, who was at the wrong place at the wrong time and, as many others, did not know the dangers of prescription medication. The police determined that the patch was sold to his friend for \$100.

"Since May 2011, I have heard of at least four more senseless fentanyl-related deaths in our very small community. I, too, am afraid for our youth.

"I would like to extend my offer to support this program by sharing my story with whomever cares enough to listen. My life has been forever changed and my heart eternally broken by the loss caused by this serious problem in our area."

The abuse of fentanyl is a growing and dangerous trend in Ontario. In fact, in North Bay alone, at least 15 deaths have been linked to fentanyl in recent years. One death is too many; 15 is a number this Legislature cannot, with any measure of conscience, ignore.

Fentanyl is a powerful pain medication that is sold in small patches via prescription. Like any opioid, it is prone to abuse. The patches are cut up and sold illicitly to addicts who have found ways to smoke, ingest or inject the drug.

When this program began, a full patch was going for \$400 on the street. Since my community—and I'll talk about that in a moment—has introduced a Patch 4 Patch program, the cost has risen to \$600 a patch. We are seeing an impact on our streets, and it is impacting our police services and resources.

Last year, a North Bay man was arrested and charged with drug trafficking after police seized 59 patches with a street value of more than \$23,000. In May 2014, Barrie police arrested eight people connected to a fentanyl patch scheme with links to North Bay and Toronto. These are just a couple of examples of the serious crime issues, but I can tell you, and the officers from the North Bay Police Service can tell you, that they were making arrests on a weekly, if not daily, basis directly related to the trafficking of fentanyl patches. That's now been greatly reduced due to this Patch 4 Patch program. Not only are there serious health considerations; the sale of these patches is empowering criminal elements in communities across the province, straining our policing resources.

The Ontario College of Pharmacists notes in the winter 2015 edition of their publication, Pharmacy Connection, that the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police is leading this Patch 4 Patch Initiative. It also notes that the Ontario College of Pharmacists and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario both support initiatives that curb opioid abuse, including participation in the Patch 4 Patch program.

Dr. Kieran Moore writes: "As president of the Kingston Academy of Medicine, I am supportive of this bill. The Patch 4 Patch Initiative is an important step in reducing deaths from accidental fentanyl overdoses, which have more than doubled in Ontario since 2008."



What is Bill 33 all about? What is a Patch 4 Patch policy? Well, I am joined here in the Legislature today by the very folks who pioneered the Patch 4 Patch program in North Bay that has had such wonderful success in curbing the trend of drug abuse.

Pat Cliche—a dear, lifelong friend of mine—of the North Bay anti-drug strategy is here today. North Bay police detective constables Brad Reaume and Tom Robertson are here today. I welcome all of you for being here. In addition, Carlene Variyan of RBP Canada, who is very supportive of the program, is here today.

We had a wonderful news conference at 1:15, and we are enjoying the support that has happened—I haven't even told you—between 1:15 and now. The phone is ringing and the emails are coming in, looking for how they can help. We're thrilled.

Bill 33 would require a person prescribing fentanyl patches to record on the prescription the name and location of the pharmacy that will fill the prescription, and to notify the pharmacy about the prescription. It also sets out various rules that apply to persons who dispense fentanyl patches, including a requirement that a new fentanyl patch may only be dispensed if the dispenser collects a used fentanyl patch from the patient or his or her authorized representative. It would also authorize the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations.

Basically, here is how Patch 4 Patch has been working so successfully in North Bay and now in many other cities, and why it needs to be a legislated process across the province. This policy, developed in partnership with local doctors and pharmacists, stipulates that in order for patients to get a new fentanyl patch, they have to return the old one intact—pretty simple. Pat and the others can tell you that it has a positive effect in North Bay. Now, 22 other communities have adopted the Patch 4 Patch solution, 17 are in the process of adopting it and three more are considering it.

In Guelph, the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy produced an informational video on the problem of fentanyl abuse last fall as part of their program launch. Other communities to get on board include Windsor, Peterborough, Sault Ste. Marie, St. Thomas, Sudbury, Timmins and Muskoka. Right now, this is being done on a voluntary basis, community by community. It's a patchwork solution, if you'll pardon the pun.

The problem is this: So long as a person has a means of transportation to get to a community without a Patch 4 Patch policy, they can still continue this chain of abuse. That's why it's so important to have a province-wide solution and why we brought this bill forward.

There are several other reasons to do this:

- to generate public education and awareness regarding fentanyl abuse and misuse, and to guarantee responsible provision of this potentially deadly drug;

- to address proper disposal of fentanyl patches to avoid harm to others;

- to address an identified increase in associated crime in the community;

- increases seen in the number of overdoses and mortality rates; and

- the significant amount of medical resources these cases can use.

#### 1500

The benefits of doing this are plentiful:

- partnerships with law enforcement, physicians and pharmacists to ensure proper return and disposal of fentanyl patches;

- an anticipated reduction in accidental and non-accidental overdoses from fentanyl. A comprehensive evaluation is currently under way in North Bay;

- limiting the trafficking of fentanyl;

- eliminating the return of counterfeit fentanyl patches and other issues around fentanyl use;

- reduction of the amount of fentanyl on our streets assists local police, as investigations require significant time and substantial police resources to build cases against those with a legitimate prescription;

- assists local efforts to develop public education and awareness programs with various community partners; and

- benefits seen from sharing best practices among numerous areas across the province.

Obviously, any such legislation needs to have a deterrent component to be effective and enforceable. To address that, the bill provides a flexible response. For example, it would allow regulatory oversight bodies to determine if their members are adhering to professional conduct standards and to determine what, if any, action is required if those standards are not being upheld. As well, the bill gives the minister the power to make regulations to deal with a variety of issues that may arise.

I have to say that I was very pleased to receive a response from Minister Hoskins to my order paper question about fentanyl abuse. It stated, "The ministry is supportive of this initiative as it is showing promise in reducing diversion and misuse of fentanyl in communities that have implemented it." I'd like to say to the minister that I would like to work with you moving forward on this.

In closing, I want to say that I believe the approach advocated in my Bill 33, which has already produced positive results in North Bay, is a model that will curb the dangerous and growing trend of fentanyl abuse across Ontario. This bill is about saving lives and helping the most vulnerable people in Ontario. Remember the words of Sherry Albert of New Liskeard and try to put yourself in her shoes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to rise and add comment on Bill 33, the Safeguarding our Communities Act. I commend the member for Nipissing for bringing forward a bill such as this.

Some of you may not know that before I came here, for many years I was a dental assistant. The office that I worked in was right in downtown Windsor. A few blocks over from the office that I worked in was the Salvation Army. They used to run a drug rehab program out of the Salvation Army, separate from the other services they

provide. Often, we would service the clientele in the rehab program. They would come in, and they were obviously coming in with some sort of dental issue, usually pain associated with it. We were always pleased to give them the treatment that they needed, but unfortunately, because of the program that they were in, there were strict rules around what we were allowed to prescribe them for their pain.

Certainly these are people who have come forward and recognized that they have an addiction issue and are trying to get over that. As many people would know, it's very difficult, once you have an addiction, to get over that addiction. They need all the support that they can. So they would come into the office and we would do the dental treatment that was required. Although we weren't dispensing narcotics or writing prescriptions for narcotics, because we certainly wanted to support them to try to get over their addiction, even if we were giving them antibiotics for something, there was a policy through not only our office but through the rehabilitation program that we were required to call in to one specific pharmacy, let them know who the patient was and let them know what it was we were prescribing. That patient was not able to go to the pharmacy and directly pick up that medication. It was sent to the rehab program at the Salvation Army and it was locked up in a dispensary. They had people at the Salvation Army who would then administer any medications, give out any medications that anyone in the program needed. That was their way of helping support those who were in the program trying to kick the addiction that they had.

I think this is a really important bill, because it talks about how we have people who are dealing with addiction problems, and that's very difficult for them. Because there are people out there who want to make lots of money any way that they can, unfortunately, they prey on people with addiction issues. This bill helps with that because it sets out a rule that says that in order to receive a fentanyl patch, you have to hand one in. I think that's a really good control to help those people who are suffering with addiction issues.

I think it also speaks volumes to trying to curtail criminal activity around people getting hold of prescription drugs and selling them to others. I know, and I'm sure it's across the province, there were issues around people getting prescriptions for stuff like OxyContin or oxycodone, and they would go into their workplace and would sell off the pills to people. They were making money that way. I think that's really an unfortunate way for anybody to try to make money, and it's very dangerous—incredibly dangerous.

So I think that with something like fentanyl patches—and this is a lot of new information for me. I wasn't aware that fentanyl patches were used for severe and chronic pain. We all know that people who suffer with chronic pain—that's not something anybody would want to live with, and we certainly want them supported. But I didn't realize that these patches were 100 times stronger than morphine or 40 times stronger than heroin. That's

startling to me, to think that there are people out there who would take advantage of someone with an addiction issue and take something like a fentanyl patch and sell it to them to make money for their own benefit, to do whatever it is they want to do with that money, and essentially build on those addictions. Even with people who have legitimate reasons for using fentanyl patches, there's always a concern of them developing an addiction. Having to return patches that have been used in order to get patches is definitely another way for the medical professionals to keep an eye on somebody to make sure that there isn't an issue developing and to make sure that these are being used the way that they're supposed to be.

I also found it interesting that even after they are used—and used properly, the way they are supposed to be—when it's time to dispose of them or discard them, there's still enough medication on them to cause an overdose. So there are concerns for me around that. Unfortunately, I think every community has homeless people, and that's certainly something that we don't want to see. But unfortunately, we do have homeless people, and often you will find them accessing, through restaurants or through pharmacies or wherever, private garbage disposals. It's shocking to me that they could potentially come across something like this that somebody has used, thought it safe to get rid of, thrown it into a garbage, and now they've come across it and they don't think anything of using it. They don't realize just how dangerous it is for them to be using these. There's always concern about people accessing medication that was meant for somebody else. There's always concern about someone using medication that would have an adverse effect against something else that they're using when they are mixing medications. To think that somebody could come across something, think it's harmless and use it and could lose their life over it is something that we definitely would like to reduce.

The member from Nipissing also talked about criminal activity, such as taking these patches and selling them for profit. Having been the community safety and corrections critic, I can speak to the challenges they face inside our correctional services on a daily basis. Their resources are stretched very thin already. They face many challenges. They have those with mental health issues who are put in facilities and who perhaps should be redirected into some sort of community support program rather than put into a correctional facility. They have many people with addiction issues who will do anything to feed their addiction, and ultimately break the law and end up in a correctional facility. These are people who actually could also benefit from supports in the community, something like the Salvation Army rehabilitation program.

I think that something like this, where a patch has to be handed in before one is given out, would help address that issue.

**1510**

In correctional facilities, they are always facing issues with people smuggling drugs in for the inmates, which



always causes issues. Something like this would stop something like fentanyl patches from making it into the correctional system. You may have people with addiction issues already in the system, and now you have somebody who is bringing in these fentanyl patches, smuggling them into a correctional facility and feeding into that addiction. Those people tend to cause more issues for the correctional officers in the system. We certainly don't want to be putting the front-line staff in our correctional facilities at any more risk than they already are, and we certainly don't want people who are in correctional services who have addiction issues having any more access to the very things that caused their addiction issues.

I appreciate the time to comment. I think other members also have comments, so I'll wrap it up for now.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'm pleased to rise to speak to private member's Bill 33, An Act to reduce the abuse of fentanyl patches, brought forward by the member for Nipissing, and also to speak to some of the points that the member from Windsor West spoke to.

Mr. Speaker, it was really interesting, as well as a learning process, to hear some of the stories that the member from Nipissing shared, and they certainly point to the need for some action in this direction.

Essentially, what Bill 33 tries to do is legislate something that's already being supported by this government on a voluntary basis, which is the fentanyl Patch 4 Patch program that the member for Nipissing referred to. As he mentioned, it's a program that's already in place. It's voluntary. A number of municipal Patch 4 Patch patch-for-patch program. What the legislation would do is make it mandatory and remove the patchwork. I believe that his bill has some merit and is definitely worth considering.

Mr. Speaker, I think I would be remiss if at this point I didn't speak to a few of the things the government is doing on this issue. A core pillar of our narcotics strategy is the creation of a narcotics monitoring system that collects and analyzes pharmacists' dispensing data. The information that is collected by the narcotics monitoring system is then used to detect unusual or inappropriate behaviour, identify trends, enhance education initiatives and develop harm reduction strategies. By understanding how monitored drugs are being prescribed and dispensed, and to whom, the ministry can help make the prescribing, dispensing and use of monitored drugs safer and more secure.

As a matter of fact, since May 14, 2012, all Ontario pharmacies—that's over 3,600 dispensers—are already submitting dispensing data about monitored drugs to the Narcotics Monitoring System. In the fall of 2013, we established the Narcotics Monitoring Working Group, which includes experts who are making recommendations on potential education strategies and initiatives to reduce narcotics addiction.

As I mentioned earlier, this is a worthy initiative, but the fact is that no matter how much we legislate, no

matter how much we monitor, we also have to focus on education and some of the root causes, something to which the member from Windsor West spoke eloquently. To that end, I would like to speak a little bit about what our government has been doing in trying to not only look at how we can monitor or legislate around addiction, but also at what we can do to address those root causes, because I believe that is where the real solution is. The real solution is in addressing the root causes of mental health and addiction. The real solution is in educating people on the potential harm of addiction or misuse of drugs.

It's ironic that so many of these drugs, including fentanyl, are put on the market to help make people's lives better, but sometimes, because of misuse, end up actually hurting people.

As all of us know in this House, our government has been very active on the mental health and addictions file. Since 2003, funding for mental health and addiction services has increased by over \$506 million to a total of \$1 billion, including our plan to increase funding by \$220 million over three years as we renew our commitment to our mental health and addictions strategy. It has provided, so far, more than 50,000 additional children and youth with access to mental health and addictions services.

In November 2014, we announced phase 2 of Ontario's mental health and addictions strategy. Phase 2 has five pillars: promoting resiliency and well-being in all Ontarians; ensuring early identification and intervention; expanding housing, employment supports, and diversion and transitions from the justice system; ensuring the right services at the right time and in the right place; and funding based on need and quality.

All of that said, I would like to reiterate one more time and applaud the member from Nipissing for bringing this legislation forward. It builds on the voluntary strategy that this government already supports, and I believe it merits worthy consideration.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member from Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton—Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** You got it, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I am pleased to rise today to speak to the bill brought forward by my colleague the member from Nipissing, Safeguarding our Communities Act (Fentanyl Patch for Patch Return Policy). We've heard a lot about this in many of our communities. Basically, the bill saying "patch for patch" is, when a patch is dispensed, they have to get the old patch back. This is to control the substance of fentanyl.

Not everybody knows what fentanyl is, but when OxyContin became harder to get on the streets because of changing legislation, drug users would turn to the fentanyl patch. Fentanyl is a narcotic, but it's generally prescribed as a slow-release form of pain medication. About three days' worth of medication is in the patch. It was used for pain control. When the need for drugs or a high by drug users came in, fentanyl patches were highly

sought after. They would find who was using the patches and they would cut them up into little pieces. They could apply it to their gums to absorb it in their mouths, or sometimes they would smoke the medication.

In my community of Brock township, I was getting some phone calls about the apparent suicides or maybe overdoses in that community. It was on the border of Brock and York region, kind of the Beaverton, Georgina, Sutton area. I phoned up the mayor at the time, Terry Clayton, who is in the gallery with us today, and he contacted, I believe, a Durham region police officer. They're also represented here today with Inspector James Stuart-Haass. So they have come down today, and they are an example of a community where we saw something happening that was, as the mayor said, a "community tragedy," and how do we address this?

I can't say how proud I am of the community that came together with the Durham region police, the York region police. At the first meeting there were crown attorneys there; the coroner's office was there; of course, the municipal council, the health unit, the high school of Brock township, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Pinewood Centre for Addictions were there. It was just amazing that they came together to say what was happening, because in that 18-month period, eight people had died, and none of those eight people had prescriptions for the drug, the fentanyl patch.

I wanted to put that into perspective because it's not about the drug itself; it's about the control of the drug. It's narcotics safety and it's public safety. That was covered in our newspaper, the Brock Citizen at the time. I've asked about and followed this as it's proceeded since—I believe that we started to get on this in that area in 2013. Now, when I check in with the Durham region police, they're saying that people are actually attempting to forge prescriptions, which is a good sign. They're not able to get them off the street, is what we're saying. So it is a good sign.

1520

The member from Nipissing said that North Bay was the first to start this Patch 4 Patch program—his guests are here, and I welcome them also to the Legislature; I think Durham region was the third. Peterborough now has it also. My local pharmacist in Lindsay, Cathy Puffer, was named Canadian Pharmacist of the Year by the Canadian Pharmacists Association, and she had brought it over to Lindsay and the Kawartha Lakes area, the Patch 4 Patch program.

It's reducing the accidental fentanyl patch overdoses because, of course, people who are using drugs are in a state of mind—mental health and addictions. They don't realize the potency of this fentanyl patch.

I have had deaths located in Kawartha Lakes also that are connected to overdose. One tragic story is that the young man was working to get off his addictions. He was trying to work with a methadone clinic. It's very difficult, fighting addictions. He was having trouble. He had no idea of the potency of the patch that he bought on the

street. Unfortunately, his parents went to his apartment in Lindsay and found that he had passed away. That is the incident that the member from Nipissing brought forward in the examples from his home: that this just occurs now; it is evolving. These community members that I mentioned, the pharmacists involved, all do this voluntarily, which is great, but the member here is asking for some legislative help.

We as provincial policy-makers need to look at this, and I think we should all today agree that the private member's bill he has brought forward and rightfully named the Safeguarding our Communities Act, when brought into law, will help these great community people, the pharmacists, the health care providers, the police services, the health units. It will help them to stop this terrible tragedy that does occur in our communities. I hope, just even by highlighting it here in the Legislature, that more communities want to come on board.

I know it was mentioned that Deputy Chief Burns at the time said that "the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police is working on a province-wide strategy on fentanyl."

I think here, today, if we can all agree that this is a good piece of legislation—and there are actually many nurses in the Legislature this time, but even today, they are nodding their heads; we see it as health care providers—and it's something that needs to be addressed. I commend the member from Nipissing for bringing such effective legislation forward.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very for the time and thank you to our guests for coming today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I, too, want to congratulate the member for Nipissing for bringing forward the Safeguarding our Communities Act.

When we talk about a fentanyl patch, it is important medication for people who have severe, chronic pain. You don't get to that kind of medication as a first line. People, for many different reasons—through accidents, through severe diseases—just cannot bear to live with pain anymore. As they go through the system, they will go from different classes and categories of painkillers. I would say that fentanyl patches are kind of at the end of that road, where you have tried other opiates, you have tried other narcotics, and then you end up on that type of medication, often with other systems to help you support your pain. Then they thrive, and then, finally, they can resume—sort of—the normal activities of daily living, and their pain is under control.

So is this medication important? Yes, absolutely. The problem is that, as has been said before, it is very potent. If you have not had this buildup of opiate medication in your system and you put this on the first time, you are at really high risk of dying. Your brain will stop you from breathing. All of a sudden you will breathe very, very shallowly or you will breathe, then forget to breathe for a couple of minutes, then take another breath and then—you die. It is as simple as that. Your friends may all be



high around you and partying, but you become very quiet and you suddenly stop breathing. And unless somebody dials 911 and knows how to do serious first aid, you will die.

I looked at a number of communities that have passed this: Wawa, Dubreuilville, Durham, Guelph, Peterborough and, certainly, North Bay, which was the first one. My community, the city of Greater Sudbury, is looking at this. The pattern is always the same. Those communities came to the decision to put the Patch 4 Patch system in place after tragedy struck, after the life—usually of a young, thriving person—is taken away.

Let's be a little bit more proactive about this. Let's do a little bit of health promotion. Let's put this system that has been proven to work to save lives—let's implement it throughout Ontario. Let's not wait until there are 15, 20, 30, hundreds more deaths from the misuse of that medication before we actually act. We have a chance to save lives today, and this is by passing this bill. I hope we do this quickly.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Our government thinks addiction is a very significant and complex issue that we take very seriously. Our government is committed to reducing and preventing addictions in Ontario in efforts to promote the overall health and safety of all Ontarians.

A core pillar of our narcotics strategy is the creation of a narcotics monitoring system that collects and analyzes pharmacists' dispensing data. This program encourages health care providers to require used fentanyl patches to be returned prior to dispensing refills for fentanyl. This is a voluntary program and includes a number of elements that are mentioned in Bill 33. The program is showing promise in reducing the diversion and misuse of fentanyl in a number of communities that have implemented the program.

Since May 14, 2012, all Ontario pharmacies are submitting dispensing data about monitored drugs to the NMS.

In the fall of 2013, we established a Narcotics Monitoring Working Group, which includes experts who are making recommendations on potential education strategies and initiatives to reduce narcotics and addictions.

In April 2014, we launched a project called ECHO—Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes—which increases provider education in appropriate prescribing and dispensing.

Our Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy is our plan to provide supports to Ontarians who need them if they experience an addiction at any point throughout their lives.

We have invested in mental health and addiction, and we know that one out of five Ontarians will experience a mental health illness in their lifetime, which could relate back to addictions. That's why our government created a Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, to support Ontarians from childhood to old age with mental health issues and with addiction issues.

Since 2003, funding for mental health and addiction services has been increased by over \$506 million, to a total of \$1 billion. Our plan is to increase funding by \$220 million over three years as we renew our commitment to our mental health and addictions strategy.

The first three years of our strategy is focused on the early years of life. It has provided more than 50,000 additional children and youth with access to mental health and addiction services.

In November 2014, we announced our expansion of Ontario's mental health and addictions strategy, phase 2. Phase 2 better addresses access, quality and value by focusing on five strategic goals that will improve our system.

We will remain committed to controlling addiction, and that's why we need to control the dispensing of this specific patch.

1530

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** It's a privilege to rise today to add my comments to Bill 33, the Safeguarding our Communities Act (Fentanyl Patch for Patch Return Policy). I want to thank and congratulate the member from Nipissing for bringing this bill that concerns a dangerous issue affecting many Ontarians today. It's unfortunate that a drug that is truly the last resort for the managing of pain for many Ontarians is being converted and redistributed in the streets in a very dangerous form to become the drug of choice for many addicts.

Fentanyl made by pharmaceutical companies is used to treat severe pain and to manage pain after surgery. Illegally-made fentanyl is made in drug labs and sold in pill and powder form. The pain-killing fentanyl is being increasingly used in the streets and, experts warn, is a drug that is cheaper and 100 times more potent than morphine.

The drug that started to show up in the streets of Toronto and other North American cities is 750 times stronger than codeine, according to Dr. Michelle Arnot, a professor of pharmacology at the University of Toronto.

Police in Alberta said they are seizing record amounts of fentanyl around Alberta, including more than 88,000 tablets since last April.

RCMP Deputy Commissioner Marianne Ryan says that organized crime is the driving force behind the making and marketing of the drug known in the street as "greenies."

Earlier this year the British Columbia Coroners Service said that fentanyl was detected in about a quarter of the 330 overdose deaths in the province last year, compared to just 5% in 2012.

Matthew Young, with the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse, said that his group issued an alert in June 2013 that the illicit fentanyl made in organized crime labs posed a danger. The centre is still working to compile hard information on the deaths across Canada that are linked to the use of this drug, but so far reliable data is not available.

Speaker, this bill proposes a simple, cost-effective way to help combat the illegal use of fentanyl and the growing threat to communities, especially youth. We must act now. Where this practice of patch-for-patch dispensing of the drug has been used, the availability has been curbed, making the drug much harder to get. That's what it's all really about: making it much harder for people to get this drug.

Getting as much of the drug off the street as possible is truly a goal that we must strive for. I'm happy to hear that the debate today is in support for the Patch 4 Patch program and that it doesn't hinder the proper or legal use of the drug for people who need it to manage pain. Certainly, we must not forget them as well, as they are usually in severe pain and this drug is something that is shown to have positive effects.

Unfortunately, the fact of society is that there's always someone who is willing to take advantage of people who are in dire straits. We see that with fentanyl as well. It is important to give our police as many tools as possible to combat the illegal trafficking of illicit goods, in this case drugs.

In SD&G we see the side effects of organized crime every day with the contraband cigarettes. In speaking with the special detachment of the OPP, RCMP and QPP officers in our riding, they talk about organized crime and how it generally moves into other fields. In our case it moves from tobacco to firearms and even into human smuggling. So it's not just the case of fentanyl. When we set up these networks, they generally hurt society in many ways.

The quick money appeals to our youth, and that's another threat. We see our youth get involved. They end up generally with a record, a record that stays with them for life. So there are lots of things other than just the use or crime that affect our communities.

Speaker, it's great to see and I look forward to voting on this bill later on this afternoon. I think it's something that the members of this House can get together on and really make a difference. It's something that's easy to do, its cost-effective and it gives another tool for our law enforcement officers, actually, to make a difference in the community.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to speak about Bill 33, An Act to reduce the abuse of fentanyl patches. Mr. Speaker, let me begin my remarks by thanking the member opposite from Nipissing for bringing this particular bill to our attention.

As a former registered nurse, I spent the latter part of my career before coming here to the chamber dealing with this particular narcotic. This is a common analgesic that we give to post-operative patients for hip and knee replacement and is very commonly dispensed.

While listening attentively to my colleague opposite talking about the bill and his passion for making sure that every young Ontarian, all Ontarians in general, not be part of this addiction and the abuse of this particular

drug—this prescribed medication. But the bill in itself focuses only on the dispenser and the prescriber—meaning physicians and pharmacists, yet his comments to us this afternoon talk about public education, use and misuse—because it is absolutely correct that we need to do a better job collectively, not just in this chamber but province-wide, in terms of public education about narcotics in general.

I know that the member opposite, from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, talked about different ways—what we call the route—the pharmacokinetics of how to administer the fentanyl patch. There are different ways: You can do an IM; an IV; transdermal—that's when we talk about the patches; transmucosal—that's underneath the tongue; and what have you.

The other very serious part about this medication, the member opposite does not really know. As a nurse, we spend a lot of time educating our patients and individuals who are using this kind of narcotic—the whole issue of the onset of the medication and the duration of this medication. In the case of a patch—the patch in itself, the fentanyl patch—the duration is 72 hours. So when someone is applying this particular medication, it is the responsibility of the applicant, in the case of nurses; or the prescribers, the physician; or the dispenser, the pharmacist—must educate the patient. As much as he talks about, in the bill, that there we will do a lot of public education, nowhere in Bill 33 talks about that. When this bill gets discharged to the committee, I would like to see more conversation about that.

I was very pleased that the member opposite did have a conversation with the College of Pharmacists and the College of Physicians and Surgeons, but it's beyond that, because you need all the regulated health professionals. I know that, every day, nurse practitioners, nurses, and other disciplines—dentists—will be using this kind of narcotic, the opiate family, to make sure to provide pain relief for the patient.

The other big portion of this particular bill—I'm pleased that the member opposite is having the conversation about the whole issue of addiction—addiction in general. The associate minister, this afternoon, talked about that we need to spend more time, as well as focusing on how to reduce addiction, and how you work with the law enforcement folks to get this off the streets. We've got to get to the bottom of prevention and to the root of the problem of addiction. At the end of the day, a child does not become an addict; these are learned behaviours. There's a root to this problem. Let's focus on the prevention, because if the focus is almost on the tertiary level—in terms of the criminal justice system or in the case of the addiction—it's too late. Let's put more resources and more energy, and focus on the prevention and the education piece.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to support the comments and the proposed Bill 33.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member from Nipissing. You have two minutes for your response.



**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** First, I want to thank the additional speakers from Windsor West, the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lake-Brock, and the members from Nickel Belt, Brampton-Springdale, Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, and Scarborough-Agincourt. Thank you for speaking in favour of this bill.

Speaker, the legislation is crafted to give the flexibility to make regulations as is seen fit. This is in consultation with the various stakeholders. I truly hope that our members will make this issue a priority and that it becomes a priority within the ministry. I know that Sherry Albert from New Liskeard hopes that too.

I urge all members of all parties in the House today to support Bill 33. We've heard from one side that talked about good control to help those suffering. Fentanyl addiction is taking advantage of someone with an addiction issue. They talked about the criminality.

1540

The member from Nickel Belt said, "Let's not wait for tragedy to strike again." She also reminded us that it's voluntary today but that it needs to be brought into law.

Again, I urge all members of all parties in the House today to support Bill 33 and the fentanyl Patch 4 Patch program so that we can start combating fentanyl abuse and its terrible consequences province-wide.

Again, I want to thank Pat Cliche, my lifelong friend from North Bay. I want to thank the detective constables from North Bay for being here and our police forces from Durham who are here and the supporting mayors and people who have assisted us in getting the bill this far. Speaker, thank you very kindly.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

# OIL, GAS AND SALT RESOURCES AMENDMENT ACT (ANTI-FRACKING), 2015

## LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES RESSOURCES EN PÉTROLE, EN GAZ ET EN SEL (ANTI-FRACTURATION)

Mr. Tabuns moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 82, An Act to amend the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act to prohibit hydraulic fracturing and related activities / Projet de loi 82, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les ressources en pétrole, en gaz et en sel en vue d'interdire la fracturation hydraulique et les activités connexes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Thank you, Speaker, and my thanks to the Clerks for their advice on this matter.

On a cold day in 2009—January 1, to be exact—Norma Fiorentino's backyard water well blew up in

Dimock, Pennsylvania. National Public Radio reported at the time: "Fiorentino's drinking water well was a time bomb. For weeks, workers in her small northeastern Pennsylvania town had been plumbing natural gas deposits from a drilling rig a few hundred yards away.... Somehow, stray gas worked into tiny crevasses in the rock, leaking upward into the aquifer and slipping quietly into Fiorentino's well." Then apparently a spark from her pump caused a blast that "tossed aside a concrete slab weighing several thousand pounds."

Ms. Fiorentino lives within a nine-square-mile area where Pennsylvania regulators have banned new gas wells after several high-profile cases of contamination led to a \$4.1-million settlement against the gas company.

Water or gas. That's our choice, Speaker: water or gas.

The bill before us today would not stop fracturing of rock to allow farmers and others to sink water wells. The bill before us would not stop the common practice of fracturing the rock at the bottom of a vertical oil or gas well. It would not stop current oil or gas drilling and production in Ontario.

It would block high-volume hydraulic fracturing for gas and oil, which most people refer to as fracking. It would ensure that any future interest in fracking for gas in Ontario, high-volume hydraulic fracturing, would be subject to a review by the Legislature—not just by the government of the day meeting in cabinet, but the Legislature itself.

The choice before us is water or gas. You can pick one or the other, but you can't have both. In some jurisdictions, governments have opted for gas. They've allowed high-volume fracking. That is their choice. They sell gas to us or to others, but someday they will have to buy their water.

Quebec faced this choice and had a review done by its environmental review board. They found that "the activities of the industry could engender consequences for the quality of the environment, particularly on the quality of surface and underground water." Water or gas.

In 2011, the US Academy of Sciences released the methane contamination of drinking water study. They looked in northeastern Pennsylvania and upstate New York—this was in 2011. They found "systematic evidence for methane contamination of drinking water associated with shale-gas extraction," and in some cases, methane levels that were a potential explosion hazard.

The state of New York reviewed the situation and legislated a moratorium. Here is a bit of what their 2014 study said: "The overall weight of the evidence ... in this public health review demonstrates that there are significant uncertainties about ... the effectiveness of some of the mitigation measures in reducing or preventing ... impacts which could adversely affect public health."

There's not enough knowledge of the industry to properly regulate it, control it and protect the public and the environment. They saw risks to drinking water from underground migration of methane and/or fracking chemicals associated with faulty well construction. Speaker, our choice is water or gas.

People have been looking at this issue in Ontario as well. The Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, released his 2010 annual report, *Engaging Solutions*. He talked about gas fracking. He wrote, "Given the close proximity of Ontario's shale formations to groundwater supplies, such development must be cognizant of the reality that, once groundwater is contaminated, remediation may be prohibitively expensive."

It's not just the Environmental Commissioner who is concerned. In December 2013, the Manitoulin Expositor reported, "The Chiefs of Ontario have made it clear they are opposed to fracking taking place anywhere in Ontario, including Manitoulin."

It's our choice, Speaker: water or gas?

The Council of Canadians and the Toronto Environmental Alliance support this bill. I want to thank them and other environmental activists for speaking up on this issue.

We don't need to reinvent the wheel. Quebec and New Brunswick went through the political turmoil that comes with the hydraulic fracturing industry. Quebec responded. They did a study. They concluded that they had to block this industry. Unfortunately, the industry had already started up, so they got stuck with a quarter-billion-dollar lawsuit. If you don't act quickly, you start getting into legal problems. If the industry gets in first, you're going to have to pay compensation or you're going to have to go through a long legal battle to protect the public interest.

There is no legal block to fracking in Ontario today. The stated position of the Minister of Natural Resources is as follows: "At this time, the ministry would not consider applications for the use of high-volume hydraulic fracturing before proper consultations with stakeholders, aboriginal communities, and the public are conducted to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect the environment."

"At this time" is no protection. Tomorrow may be another story. Next month may be another story. Next year may be another story. The minister doesn't have to come back to the Legislature for approval. He isn't legally required to have any hearings. It is a decision, as they say, that will be taken at the pleasure of the government.

There are a lot of arguments being made by gas lobbyists against our taking action. Some lobbyists say that there isn't enough gas in Ontario to make hydraulic fracturing viable—not commercially interesting—but that didn't protect Maryland. Maryland has a small tip of the Marcellus Shale—the richest shale—in its western region. The exploitation of that small bit of shale led to huge conflict in Maryland and a vote in the Legislature to put a moratorium on fracking. We have a tip of the Marcellus Shale running into the southern end of Ontario. It doesn't take a lot for someone to have interest.

If there is too little to exploit, why is it that gas lobbyists are sticking their nose into our business? Let them run their industry; let them sell their product. Let us make our laws about protecting our own environment.

The other argument they make is that we will be looking at higher gas prices if we somehow discourage the frackers. I don't think the gas industry has been up front with people about the risk of higher prices that are inherent in this industry.

1550

Many commentators in the United States have expressed their concern about the precarious state of the fracking industry. One article published by Bloomberg News on April 30 last year was entitled, "Shale Drillers Feast on Junk Debt to Stay on Treadmill," and they talked about Rice Energy Inc., a natural gas producer with risky credit that "raised \$900 million in three days this month." That was April of last year. Not bad, especially since it has lost money three years in a row and has drilled fewer than 50 wells—most named after superheroes and monster trucks. They said they will spend \$4.09 for every buck they earn in 2014.

They quoted Tim Gramatovich, who helps manage more than \$800 million as chief investment manager at Peritus Asset Management: "There's a lot of Kool-Aid that's being drunk now by investors." Rice Energy's bond offering a year ago was rated at CCC+ by Standard and Poor's. That's seven steps below investment grade. Most pension funds, most insurance companies wouldn't be allowed to buy this kind of investment. In a related Bloomberg article, it was reported that Standard and Poor's says that of the 97 energy exploration and production companies it grades, 75 are rated below investment grade.

It's not just one company; it's a whole industry that floats on junk bonds. If there's as much oil and gas as the shale industry says there is, then why are their investments speculative? Why, Speaker? Maybe they know something about the long-run production that the rest of us should know.

The industry says there are huge amounts of gas, but the well-respected journal *Nature* published an article in December called "Natural Gas: The Fracking Fallacy." They reported that companies are betting big on natural gas, investing, in the United States, hundreds of billions of dollars in new plants that rely on natural gas: fertilizer plants, chemical plants, electricity generation. The industry is working very hard to increase demand dramatically, and we all know what happens when demand is increased dramatically: The price follows.

When academics reanalyzed the data, they found that there are substantial risks here for society as a whole—very substantial risks. A lot of people have been making risky bets on shale gas. Local oil and gas interests want us to bet big on it as well. They want to make sure they can get at the last dregs of gas here in Ontario, should prices go through the roof. They don't want the Legislature to be an obstacle.

Speaker, the choice before us is simple: Protect our water and farmland or stand aside while the gas fracking industry expands into Ontario. I don't think we need a long debate to settle this question. I urge all members of the Legislature to support my Bill 82 so that Ontario can protect itself and set its own environmental laws.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** It's my pleasure to rise today in the House and speak to Bill 82, the anti-fracking bill before us, and in so doing serve to articulate some important messages that will allow us to frame this conversation from our point of view.

Protecting our environment and our water is a top priority for our government. There are currently no applications before the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry requesting approval to explore for shale gas or oil, or to use high-volume hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking. At this time, the ministry would not consider applications for the use of high-volume hydraulic fracturing before proper consultations with stakeholders, aboriginal communities and the public are conducted to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect the environment. Staff from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will continue to monitor the latest developments and research in other jurisdictions.

It's important to underscore that fracking is not occurring anywhere in Ontario. Currently, there are no applications—as I just mentioned—before the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry requesting approval to explore for shale gas or oil, or for the use of fracking. Although Ontario has some bedrock units similar to gas-producing shale rocks located in the United States and Quebec, at this time there is no indication that Ontario hosts economic reserves of shale gas.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has a mature regulatory framework—and this is critically important—that is in place and that reflects Ontario's broad experience regarding the oil and gas industry. Under the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act, or the OGSRA, all oil and gas wells, including exploratory wells, must be licensed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry for drilling, operation and plugging. The OGSRA authorizes the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to attach conditions to licenses to ensure the establishment, operation and plugging of wells is done safely and in an environmentally-sensitive manner.

Further protections include the Clean Water Act, which ensures communities protect their drinking water supplies through prevention by developing collaborative watershed-based plans that are locally driven and based on science. Despite this important protection, it is important, Speaker, to note that unfortunately both opposition parties voted against the Clean Water Act and taking stronger measures to protect our drinking water. The opposition PC Party voted against protecting our Great Lakes and failed to adequately protect drinking water systems while in government.

Our government is committed to ensuring Ontarians continue to enjoy some of the cleanest drinking water in North America. The Great Lakes are vitally important to the people of Ontario for our drinking water, our quality of life and prosperity. We need to restore them now to

continue to enjoy their benefits for this and future generations. That is why we reintroduced a strengthened Great Lakes Protection Act this year which recognizes the importance of the Great Lakes to Ontario's economy, environment and the health of our citizens. As the member for Burlington, which enjoys a riding on the shores of Lake Ontario, I can tell you that the economy related to our Great Lakes is of critical importance to the citizens of my riding.

In closing, I want to underscore that our government enjoys excellent working relationships with environmental groups, who are watchful, mindful and vigilant. We are proud of our working relationships with industry as well. They have invested significantly in our province's economic development and prosperity.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I want to acknowledge right off the get-go that I'll be splitting my time with the members for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, Chatham-Kent-Essex and Niagara West-Glanbrook.

As I rise today to respond to Bill 82 from the member from Toronto-Danforth, I'm very concerned that this bill will have a negative impact on the province of Ontario, its economy. As such, I'll say right now I will not be supporting this bill, and I strongly urge every member of the Legislature that's here to follow suit.

Currently in Ontario there are zero shale gas developments and zero viable opportunities, according to the minister himself, for shale gas development. As such, Bill 82 is completely unnecessary. Mr. Speaker, it sends the wrong message to an industry that has invested billions of dollars in infrastructure and employs thousands of individuals in communities right across this province, and in my own as well. The fact of the matter is that hydraulic fracture treatment of oil and natural gas wells to improve production rates has been in use in this province, as a couple of speakers have already said, for more than 60 years. This practice has also been safely used in Ontario for conventional vertical wells for almost as long. In southwestern Ontario, more than 140 companies are in the oil and natural gas business, and they contribute over \$4 billion to the oil and gas sector and to the provincial economy.

Natural gas from shale formations in the northeastern United States already makes up—and this is important—50% of the gas that's used in Ontario at this time. Residents of Toronto and other parts of Ontario are already benefiting from gas fracture that's taking place already. I don't know whether that's a dog-in-the-manger attitude, that we've got it and we don't want the rest of the people in rural Ontario to. Many people in rural Ontario would like to have gas, and there's gas there. There's a surplus of gas that we would like to make available to rural Ontario.

The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Premier herself said they want to expand

agriculture in Ontario. They want to see the agricultural economy improve. The only way they're going to do that, to heat their homes and their barns and to dry grain, is with access to a surplus of natural gas which is available. I wanted to get that on the record.

Also, being parochial, in my riding of Sarnia-Lambton shale gas has made a world of difference. It's been a game-changer in the petrochemical industry. They were on their last legs prior to 2007-08.

**1600**

Before I came to this House—some people said it got better after I left, but anyway, when I left to come here, shale gas was just coming on stream in the northeastern United States. The company I worked for, Nova Chemicals, had access to that Marcellus Shale. They've spent hundreds of millions of dollars investing in the local Ontario economy in Sarnia, and there is going to be more money spent there, because they've got access to this cheap form of energy. The opportunity to lower energy rates and for economic growth and increased investment is theirs for the taking.

I'm certain that if the member from Toronto—Danforth asked his colleagues from rural Ontario, like the members from Timmins—James Bay, Kenora—Rainy River, Timiskaming—Cochrane, Algoma—Manitoulin, Nickel Belt and many others, they would say they'd like access to natural gas for their municipalities. They don't have it today, but they'd like to get it. Also for the members across the aisle, I know there are members from Thunder Bay—Superior North, Sault Ste. Marie, Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, and Sudbury who also need natural gas in their ridings.

As I said, I'm going to share my time with my colleague. At this time, we will not be supporting this bill. Those are the reasons why. I could go on at great length, but my time is limited.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'm honoured to be able to stand here today and bring the voice of the environmental community in Windsor and Essex county to this discussion on Bill 82, the anti-fracking bill. I've kept an open mind on the issue, and I hope other members have as well.

I first raised a question on this in the House back on the 9th of December, the day the Auditor General brought in her report. My question to the Premier was: Would we allow the examples set in Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and place a moratorium on fracking in Ontario? The answer given by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry was that there was no need because there was no fracking under way, and if anyone applied for a fracking licence, it would require a legislative change.

I urged the minister to act anyway, because of the lawsuits that have been launched in the United States claiming Quebec had no right to interfere with an American company wanting to frack below the St. Lawrence River, which leads us today to Bill 82, thanks to the member from Toronto—Danforth, Mr. Tabuns.

Speaker, I don't have to tell you how easy it is to get on the Internet these days and do a search on fracking. Just a few strokes of the keyboard and you can get it. I found there are 500,000 fracking wells in America, each requiring 400 tanker loads of water. I won't burden you with the math, Speaker, but think about it: 500,000 wells, each with 400 tanker trucks back and forth, day after day. That's a lot of air pollution at a time when most of us are expressing grave concern about greenhouse gases.

To complete each fracking job, it takes anywhere from one million to eight million gallons of water, water that will never be used for drinking or recreational purposes again. That water is mixed with sand and chemicals to create what is known as a fracking fluid. For each of these 500,000 wells, it takes about 40,000 gallons of fracking fluid.

At this point, let me point out that each of those wells can be fracked at least 18 times. If you're still doing the math on 500,000 wells, 400 tanker trucks and all of that, it adds up. I won't bother you with the math. They're talking about 72 trillion gallons of water, 360 billion gallons of chemicals. It boggles the mind.

When scientists look at the content in this chemical cocktail, there are 600 chemicals used in fracking fluid. I hope it shocks you, Speaker. It shocked me. There are known carcinogens and toxins in that fracking fluid: lead, mercury, uranium, radium, methanol, formaldehyde and hydrochloric acid.

So they take this chemical cocktail; they flush it down. It goes a mile or two beneath the surface. Pressurized water comes out, then fractures the rock or splinters it, and then the natural gas comes in. It sounds simple, except for the methane gas and toxic chemicals getting in below the earth and staying there, contaminating the groundwater.

When scientists sample the methane in wells used for drinking water near these fracking sites, the methane levels are as much as 17 times higher than in water wells further away. The scientists have documented this. They say that contaminated well water can cause sensory, respiratory and neurological damage.

We've mentioned the huge amounts of water that's required in each of these wells. Only 30% to 50% of that water—the water that's mixed with sand and chemicals—is recovered. The rest stays below the surface, and it's not biodegradable. The recovered water—let's not even call it water; it's more waste fluid—is brought up, trucked away and dumped in open-air pits to evaporate. Of course, as the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change will tell you, this contaminated fluid will release into the air harmful volatile organic compounds, or VOCs. These VOCs contaminate the air and trigger acid rain as well as ground-level ozone.

That's where we're at, Speaker. We can sit on these 300,000 barrels of natural gas a day, or we can pay the long-term price to our environment and risk the damage to our natural environment and hope and pray we don't have an accident. I think the price is too high. I think that stuff should stay where it is.



The problem is that this industry has just blossomed. It's out there, but there hasn't been enough scientific evaluation of how it's done and what the repercussions are. We need the science to catch up to the industry on this. We have so many earthquakes all around us. There was one outside Detroit last week—what was it?—4.2 on the Richter scale. We've had earthquakes around Amherstburg and Leamington. They've had them up in Aurora. We don't need to gamble on accidents. We don't need to gamble that an earthquake is somehow going to fracture something below the ground and all of this fluid is going to get into our groundwater.

I hope to have more to say on it later. I know I'm rapidly running out of time here, and I know the member for Parkdale–High Park wants to speak on this issue as well. But I guess if I have any advice at all, it's to go very slow on this. We don't want to allow fracking if it's going to cause long-term damage in this community. It has been banned pretty well everywhere else in our immediate neighbourhoods. We don't want to extend it into Ontario.

Thank you for your time this afternoon, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, one can ask how this House would feel about this bill if Ontarians felt that the province had a sizable oil and gas industry that creates jobs and builds this province. Well, the truth is that Ontario does have a sizable oil and gas industry that does create jobs and builds this province, and Ontario engineers, trades, fabricators, suppliers and service providers do earn their living serving the Ontario oil and gas sector. In fact, oil has been extracted from Ontario for more than 150 years, and oil and gas shale deposits identified in the United States might not stop at the political border that Canada has with the United States.

So would reasonable people acting in a rational manner fore swear the responsible and prudent extraction of oil and gas from Ontario sources for all time, knowing fully that the supplies of oil and gas consumed by Ontarians already come from sources whose resources are extracted using shale fracturing techniques?

This proposal by the member for Toronto–Danforth asks Ontarians to assume that petroleum and gas prices will always be low, that the Middle East will never constrict supplies for political and conflict purposes, that economic growth in North America will always be sluggish and that interest rates will never rise. Everyone who has been alive for more than 20 years knows that all of these underlying assumptions are false.

Do you know why your bills for natural gas in recent years have fallen by close to half? It's because of an abundance of supply created by extracting natural gas from shale deposits in North America. The member's bill would expose you to a shortage of supply and raise prices to heat your home in the wintertime. Just this morning, the same member levelled his criticism at our world-class nuclear power industry. So he has come out squarely against the two most economic, abundant and available

sources of electrical and heating energy that we use in the province of Ontario.

Though your natural gas bill doesn't show where your home heating fuel comes from, it's worth letting Ontarians know that half your natural gas comes from sources where it is obtained by shale fracturing—half. Does the member for Toronto–Danforth think it's okay to extract gas by shale fracturing in the United States or in other parts of Canada, but just not in Ontario? Did the member for Toronto–Danforth spend any time at all considering the impact on Ontario's oil and gas sector before drafting this reactionary bill? I actually know the answer to that: He did no consultation whatsoever.

**1610**

What this means is that this bill proposes to ban a process that is not taking place and for which nobody is applying for a permit. What a slap in the face to rural Ontario, where people expect Ontario gas companies and their government to work with municipalities to extend natural gas pipelines and enable supply into more areas in rural Ontario. Our gas delivery companies—Enbridge, Union Gas and others—have a record of safely, responsibly and economically delivering natural gas here in Ontario that extends back more than a century. Our suppliers have invested billions of dollars in Ontario.

The correct way to deal with oil and gas extraction through shale fracturing is to allow Ontario towns and cities and their people to consider the merits and drawbacks of shale fracturing through a sensible dialogue, such as what would be achieved in the next version of the long-term energy plan, scheduled for 2016. That would be a fair and prudent way of using the ample time that Ontario has to consider how to develop the potential of Ontario's very own prospecting, extraction, refining, distributing and marketing of petroleum resources.

As nobody is extracting oil and gas through shale fracturing, nor is proposing to do so, there is absolutely no need to rush to an arbitrary ban over something that isn't taking place that would certainly prove inappropriate in a broader and more responsible study of how oil and gas should best contribute to Ontario's total energy supply and demand, now and in the decades going forward.

So I cannot and will not support this bill, and I urge members to reject its narrow approach to the Ontario oil and gas sector.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I am a little concerned from what I just heard from the other side. It has not happened very often, but it's happening today. I'm just not sure who is the token and who is speaking on genuine principle. Well, actually, I do know; it's me.

While I admire the passion of my friend from Toronto–Danforth, he's bringing forth a bill that would be, quite simply, bad policy. He doesn't like the practice. I get it. He likes having a warm home, though. As my colleague Bob Bailey said, and the member from Mississauga–Streetsville—Bob and Bob—50% of the gas

that we use today comes from shale deposits in the United States.

I remember early in my career here when the price of natural gas was at least double, maybe almost three times what it is today. We were talking about liquefied natural gas that was going to be our next source of supply because there was, at maximum, maybe 25 to 30 years of gas supply left here in North America. We were going to be bringing that in from the Middle East by ship, liquefied, in tankers. That's the real environmental way to be shipping this stuff, eh? And then we were going to be processing it in ports. All these plants were going to be built on the seacoasts of the country, and we were going to be reprocessing it into a way that we could use it here in our homes.

Then we were talking about—maybe we're looking at gas—\$13 or \$15 natural gas. Today, it averages, depending upon the season, somewhere between just under \$3 up to \$4 a cubic metre. It is the shale discoveries that have allowed that to happen.

One of the biggest problems we have in this province today is the price of electricity. If we didn't have access to cheap natural gas—I know my friend doesn't want to see nuclear power—can you imagine the cost of running the 19 natural gas power plants we have in this province if we were dealing with \$10 or \$13 natural gas? We have to ask ourselves, “Is that really where we can afford to go?”

I absolutely believe that anything that will happen in the future will be done in an absolutely environmentally responsible way. I expect this government or any other government to conduct it in that fashion. This is not going to be a free-for-all. We're going to make sure that the environment is always protected in whatever we happen to do.

But from the point of view of passing a bill such as this—and I understand how he feels about this—once you close the door to this practice, you are never going to re-open it. You will never get it re-opened. It is much easier—there is no fracking going on in Ontario today but we do have to have that option, should we need it. If you close the door to this practice being done in an environmental way, you will never get that door open again. That would be wrong.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I love it when Conservatives and Liberals come out as versions of the same party. It sort of reminds me of what just happened with Bill C-51 federally, where Justin and Harper voted together again. So, together again, Liberals and Conservatives—love it.

Let's talk about what actually was said by the member from Toronto—Danforth. I want to credit him for being attacked by Union Gas, which is a division of Spectra Energy, a large company from Texas. It's not every day that a private member's bill by an opposition member in the province of Ontario brings on the big guns from Texas in the energy department. You've got to love it. And not just any energy company, but one called Spectra.

It reminds me of Spectre—remember, the James Bond controllers of the world, evil genius? Spectre, Spectra; whatever. They're attacking the member from Toronto—Danforth. You know he hit a nerve.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Methinks our friends across the aisle protest too much. We think our friends to the right of me, quite literally, protest too much.

If there's no possibility of fracking happening in Ontario, if there are no asks from any energy company, what's the problem? In fact, after this bill this afternoon, we're going to be debating Bill 9, ending coal. We've already ended coal, but we're going to be talking about ending coal. There we're saying, “We'll never do it again.” Here we're saying, “Please don't do it.”

I don't understand the protest. If there's no threat of fracking, why don't we pass this bill? Because here's the thing, to my friends to the right: It's not viable. I don't think they were listening when the member from Toronto—Danforth talked about junk bonds financing this industry. It is not economically viable. That's number one. Number two, it is not environmentally viable. So you're not helping the economy by having fracking. In fact, lawsuits abound where fracking happens. It doesn't pay. It doesn't make money. It doesn't do any of that.

And you are absolutely hurting the environment. Again, I'm not saying this; David Suzuki has said this.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It must be gospel.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Well, every environmentalist worth their salt, environmentalists who are listening to this, I think would vote with one accord, saying that fracking hurts our water supply; it hurts our environment. As the member from Toronto—Danforth said, you can have one or the other, but you can't have both. You can't have a safe water supply and fracked gas. You can't have both.

This is proven. I know some members to the right like to believe in creationism still. I'm sorry, I'm a United Church minister: Darwin is real. Okay?

On the same issue here, we cannot dispel the scientific facts and we cannot dispel the economic ones either. That's critical. That should be critical for all of us. Where fracking has happened, lawsuits ensue, money is not made, jobs are not created. That's what the member from Toronto—Danforth was talking about.

If we actually speak to the facts, if we actually look at the facts, never mind the historical facts, the realities of what has happened in Quebec, what has happened in other jurisdictions in the States where fracking has happened—and how did they fare? They didn't fare well. It didn't go well. It ended up in lawsuits; it ended up in a problem. Jobs were not created, money was wasted and the environment was hurt. That's really very simple.

**1620**

So I want to commend him. I think it's amazing when Spectra, from the great state of Texas, takes on a member of the opposition's private member's bill—the evil geniuses who are trying to mastermind the universe. I think that's really cool. I think it's amazing when Union



Gas writes a letter to every single member of this assembly, trying to pressure them to vote against his bill. I would say that for that reason alone we should support it. For that reason alone we should support it, because lobbying and lobbyists should be spoken to and spoken with, but not bent over to—sorry to say, Mr. Speaker—particularly Spectra Energy from Texas.

I have 42 seconds left. All I can appeal to, to those who care about science and care about the economy, is those two salient details. I'm going to say it again: It doesn't make money, it's not good for the economy and it's bad for the environment. Where is the win here? Where is the win? Please, vote with environmentalists. Vote with scientists. Vote with economists. Vote against the fracking industry, supported by junk bonds and not supported by scientists and environmentalists. Do the right thing.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Look, I wish we had natural gas and shale deposits in the province of Ontario. I wish this debate was of practical consequence, because I tell you, I would put every ounce of energy I have, full throttle, into helping low-income families, into helping those who are out of work, into helping those struggling to pay their bills to benefit from shale gas, the lower costs and the jobs this would bring to the province of Ontario.

I look across the lake, Speaker, to Pennsylvania. What has it done in Pennsylvania? Some 24,000 drilling jobs, some 200,000 jobs in support in trucking and construction, and an average wage in the industry of US\$62,000, US\$20,000 higher than the state average. They have reversed the downward course. I would love to see the rustbelt of southwestern Ontario under government revitalize the opportunity of lower-cost gas at world-class standards.

I look to North Dakota, where the average per capita income has been driven up to the highest in the union by the fracking industry, up 31%, compared to only 10% for no-fracking South Dakota. Leasing fees have given a new lease on life to landowners and struggling farmers. The United States has saved money for a lot of people across the board, particularly those who are seniors and on fixed incomes. It has brought manufacturing from overseas back to the United States. It has strengthened the middle class and it has given them a greater sense of North American energy security.

To date, fracking has been one of the greatest technological revolutions of this 21st century. You look at what steam did, the automobile, the telephone, flight, the Internet: They lowered costs. They improved the quality of life. They changed the way we live. They had a major transformational impact on day-to-day life. So too with fracking and lower-cost gas, but those across the floor want none of it. They are seeing environmental politics trump environmental science.

There are some like Environmental Defense, a very green organization—Mark Brownstein heads up the natural gas sector of the Environmental Defense Fund.

With the right technology, the right management practices and the right regulations, properly enforced, there are things we can do to reduce the risks that are associated with unconventional oil and gas development.

Speaker, I want to see the lower costs, I want to see more jobs, I want to see a boom in manufacturing in the province of Ontario, I want to see us open for this and I want to see us benefit from the technological change that fracking brings to improve families in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Bill 82 seeks to ban the extraction of natural gas or oil in shale. I've got some real concerns as to why this is even necessary in the first place. The bill seeks to ban a practice that doesn't even exist in the province of Ontario.

Union Gas, based in my riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, employs hundreds of constituents and nearly 2,200 Ontarians across this province overall. They have assured me that they have no immediate plans to extract natural gas from shale, so we struggle to see why this bill is being brought forward at all.

I stand in defence of our natural gas industry, as it is vital to my constituents. Natural gas is, in fact, incredibly important for the agricultural industry, which my riding's economy is based on.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture went so far as to state that "the extension of natural gas pipelines in rural Ontario is the largest economic stimulation the provincial government can provide." It would be misguided and reckless to impose such a restrictive ban on a critical industry to address an issue that simply does not exist in Ontario.

Strict, scientifically-based rules and regulations around the safe extraction of natural gas and oil from shale are welcomed by the natural gas industry. Government and stakeholders must work together. That way we can protect our environment while also creating jobs and driving down energy costs and prices in Ontario.

Speaker, while I sincerely respect the member from Toronto-Danforth, I'm concerned that this bill is doing nothing more than fear-mongering against oil and gas. I cannot and will not support Bill 82, the anti-fracking bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I will be voting in favour of the bill that's before the House. Anybody who has had the position of Minister of the Environment where it was a serious position in the government could not possibly do anything other than vote in favour of this particular bill.

Fracking has the following consequences:

- contamination of groundwater;
- methane pollution and its impact on climate change;
- air pollution impacts;
- exposure to toxic chemicals;
- blow-outs due to gas explosion;
- waste disposal;

- large-volume water use in water-deficient regions;
- fracking-induced earthquakes; and
- workplace safety and infrastructure degradation.

I recognize that there's always the attraction when people will say, "Well, it's going to produce jobs." Of course, people like to see that happen, but not with the consequence of degrading our environment.

As for the Conservatives, I'm not surprised. Every time I've watched in this House when there was a choice between protecting the environment and not doing it, the Conservatives consistently chose not to protect the environment. So I'm not surprised by that.

I will say to some of the members who represent areas that have oil and gas that I understand that. As local members, I do not denounce them for that. I just want to say that one of the toughest jobs always in the Legislature is the environment critic for the Progressive Conservative Party, because they have to take the anti-environment stand every time.

First of all, listen to what the member said in his speech. What the bill actually says is of much less consequence in terms of what you people are objecting to than what he actually said he is endeavouring to do with this bill. He outlined a number of things that his bill doesn't do.

But if we are here as stewards of the future to protect our environment, to allow fracking to take place in the province of Ontario with all of the environmental consequences is simply, in my view, not acceptable—not only for this generation, but for future generations.

We have a chance today to do the following: We can either stand up for the environment, protect our water supply and protect ourselves from the potential air pollution that's out there or we can cave in to those who advocate in favour of this. They've called lobbyists from time to time. We can cave in to those who are never concerned about the environmental consequences of anything done in this province.

I think that this bill is worthy of consideration before this House. I hope it goes to committee, where there will be further discussion of it. I certainly will be voting for it at all stages—first reading, second reading, committee and the final stage. Others will make their particular choice, but at least don't block the member from having his bill go to committee for further analysis and consideration.

1630

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Toronto—Danforth. You have two minutes for your reply.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I want to thank all the members who rose to speak, whether they disagreed with me or not. I think it's important for us to have a full, thorough, complete debate in this House.

I want to talk to two issues. In this, I'll address the Liberals: Your other parties in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec have had to confront these issues head-on. Liberals in Atlantic Canada have assessed the

kind of turmoil and environmental price that people had to pay for fracking, and they took steps. You, in voting for this measure, would be in line with your colleagues in other parts of Canada. You should be voting for this bill.

But I want to speak to the points raised by my colleagues in the Conservative Party. A number of decades ago, Ontario Hydro had a surplus of electricity, and it set off on a program called Live Better Electrically. It convinced people throughout rural Ontario to get rid of their wood and get rid of their oil and put in baseboard heating. I have to tell you right now, they are paying the price.

They got sucked into propane: "You're paying too much; get into propane." I talked to my colleagues from rural Ontario who find that their constituents are getting hammered because now the market has been saturated. The demand is there, and the price for propane goes up.

The natural gas industry in the United States has a surplus. They're trying to get LNG plants built so they can ship it overseas. They're building tens of billions of dollars of industrial infrastructure in the United States to soak up all that gas. They want to sell to the market here.

I want to say: Energy companies create demand so they can drive up price. What we're doing here today is protecting our environment. We should be aware of the cautionary tales from a few years before.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

#### IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN ONTARIO ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DES SERVICES DE SANTÉ MENTALE ET DE LUTTE CONTRE LES DÉPENDANCES EN ONTARIO

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 49, standing in the name of Ms. Armstrong. Ms. Armstrong has moved second reading of Bill 95, An Act to continue the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council and to amend the Ombudsman Act in respect of providers of mental health and addictions services.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98(j)—the member for London—Fanshawe, would you like it referred to a specific committee?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I'd like to send it to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested it be referred to justice policy. Agreed? Agreed.



SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITIES  
ACT (FENTANYL PATCH FOR PATCH  
RETURN POLICY), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR PROTÉGER  
NOS COLLECTIVITÉS  
(POLITIQUE D'ÉCHANGE  
DE TIMBRES DE FENTANYL)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Fedeli has moved second reading of Bill 33, An Act to reduce the abuse of fentanyl patches.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98(j)—the member for Nipissing—

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** SCOFEA.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested that the bill be referred to SCOFEA. Agreed?

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs—the Clerk wants all the words in Hansard.

Agreed? Agreed.

OIL, GAS AND SALT RESOURCES  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(ANTI-FRACKING), 2015  
LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR LES RESSOURCES  
EN PÉTROLE, EN GAZ ET EN SEL  
(ANTI-FRACTURATION)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Tabuns has moved second reading of Bill 82, An Act to amend the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act to prohibit hydraulic fracturing and related activities. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.” In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1635 to 1640.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can I ask members to please take their seats?

Mr. Tabuns has moved second reading of Bill 82, An Act to amend the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act to prohibit hydraulic fracturing and related activities.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

Damerla, Dipika  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Dong, Han  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy

Mantha, Michael  
Martins, Cristina  
McMahon, Eleanor  
Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Mori, Reza

Sattler, Peggy  
Tabuns, Peter  
Vernile, Daiene  
Wong, Soo

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Clark, Steve  
Delaney, Bob  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Fedeli, Victor

Hardeman, Ernie  
Hillier, Randy  
Hudak, Tim  
MacLaren, Jack  
Martow, Gila  
McDonell, Jim

Munro, Julia  
Nicholls, Rick  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Todd  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Yakubski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 29; the nays are 18.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to—

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The Standing Committee on General Government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested that it be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government. Agreed? Agreed.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

ENDING COAL  
FOR CLEANER AIR ACT, 2015  
LOI DE 2015  
SUR L'ABANDON DU CHARBON  
POUR UN AIR PLUS PROPRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 28, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities / Projet de loi 9, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement pour exiger la cessation de l'utilisation du charbon pour produire de l'électricité dans les installations de production.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Burlington.

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I'll be sharing my time with the Associate Minister of Health and the Chair of Cabinet.

Speaker, as you know, I don't have much time left in my time allotment for today, but I just wanted to underscore the importance of making sure that we continue to enjoy the kind of health and environmental benefits that come with prohibiting coal use for electricity generation in Ontario. I'm proud to stand and be part of a govern-

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Bradley, James J.  
Chan, Michael

Gélinas, France  
Gretzky, Lisa  
Hatfield, Percy  
Jaczek, Helena  
Malhi, Harinder

Murray, Glen R.  
Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
Natyshak, Taras  
Potts, Arthur  
Qaadri, Shafiq

ment that got rid of coal and has brought cleaner air to our province.

As an asthmatic, I know that there are less people like me clogging up our hospital emergency departments, and as someone who represents a riding where one person in five is a senior citizen, I know they are enjoying cleaner air as a consequence of our leadership.

I would ask all members of this House to support the Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, 2014, today, and underscore the importance of cleaner air in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I rise and I'm delighted to speak to a bill entitled Ending Coal for Cleaner Air. How can you argue against cleaner air?

This is a transformational bill, because in Ontario, through this bill, it's going to be the single largest greenhouse reduction initiative across North America. It makes Ontario the first North American jurisdiction to close coal-fired electricity generation.

There are two main things to note about this bill. First, the bill would prohibit the use of coal at the following electricity generation stations: Atikokan, Lambton, Nanticoke and Thunder Bay. More importantly, the bill is crafted in such a way that future governments, or any government, cannot, through regulation, create exemptions for stand-alone facilities that would use coal to generate electricity.

What is really interesting, of course, is the fact that the plan was to stop using coal to generate electricity as of December 31, 2014, but here in Ontario we were actually able to stop that well before December 2014. In many ways, the bill is catching up with the reality. Usually it is reality that has to catch up with legislation. But, in this case, it's a good-news story. It speaks to the commitment of this government, the fact that we've already stopped using coal and this legislation is actually catching up with the reality that today, in Ontario, we are the first jurisdiction in North America where we do not use coal for stand-alone electricity generation facilities.

This is transformational. As the associate minister responsible for wellness, I cannot underscore the importance of clean air. It's actually ironic that with so much modernization and this continuous push for higher standards of living, yet, at the same time, because of environmental pollution, so much of our health is compromised.

You'd be interested to know that every year in Ontario—just in Ontario—poor-quality air can cause about \$1.5 billion in environmental damages. Air pollution is a major environmental risk to health. By reducing air pollution levels, we can reduce the burden of disease from stroke, heart disease, lung cancer and both chronic and acute respiratory diseases, including asthma. This has real benefits for you, me and generations to come.

I'm absolutely delighted to support this bill. It's such a great feeling, once again, to underscore the idea that this is legislation that is catching up with the good-news reality, the fact that coal generation in Ontario has already been phased out.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The deputy House leader.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** One of the most significant initiatives in all of North America, and perhaps around the world, in terms of dealing with air pollution and climate change, has been the discontinuation of the use of coal for the production of electricity in Ontario. It wasn't an easy decision to be made. It wasn't easy, because it's cheaper to burn coal. It's the old story of many people always want the cheapest, not always what's best for the environment and perhaps the economy at large.

They look at the cost based on other forms of producing electricity that are more costly, and yet people within the scientific and medical field have clearly revealed—and among them was the Ontario Medical Association—the damaging effect of coal, the burning of coal for electricity in the province of Ontario, on the health of Ontarians.

I can recall on many occasions going back home to St. Catharines and looking at the ugly yellow streak coming across the sky from the Nanticoke Generating Station. That was coal being used to produce electricity. That contamination was going over the Niagara Peninsula, but also over northwestern New York state. The end of the use of coal in those facilities has made a remarkable difference.

We know that there are other factors that influence air contamination and air pollution, but if you look at the last couple of summers, where we usually have high alerts for pollution, the number of days which were smog days, as we used to call them, has, at least in the last couple of years, since ending the use of coal for the production of electricity—that has diminished remarkably. That means better air quality in our province and better health for people in our province. The federal government, which likes to drag its feet sometimes on environmental initiatives of this kind, is out bragging about how much air pollution has been reduced and what a contribution we are making as a country to reducing greenhouse gases, and it's using the Ontario example, that Ontario example being the discontinuation of the burning of coal for the production of electricity in this province.

**1650**

Other options are being used—more benign options. Certainly, for many years we have had electrical power produced by hydro, that being water production. There are many smaller initiatives in that regard now. At one time, Ontario Hydro, as it was called, really didn't like these smaller units. They loved the big units, the big nukes, the big units such as Niagara Falls. We've expanded that. There's far more production coming now, despite the fact that the topography of Ontario in the north is rather flat instead of like this—that is, almost vertical in Quebec. We're able to produce a significant amount of electricity utilizing hydro power, which is water power, of course.

We have nuclear generating stations which produce a significant amount of power in this province and have operated over the years, providing that base power.



We're looking at new ways of generating electricity which again are much more environmentally benign than the burning of coal was. The cleaner electricity, the greener electricity that we're using, has made an impact.

Does some of this, such as the nuclear plants, contribute to the cost? It does. If you look at nuclear production in Ontario, how many times have you ever seen any one of these operations come in on time and on budget? Well, the answer is never, because they never have, nor does the refurbishing. But the enemy of the good is the perfect, and we struggle with that. We do the best we can. It is a fact that nuclear produces electricity in this province, for instance. We have to work hard as a province, as other jurisdictions do, to ensure the cost overruns are not out of this world, as they have been in the past.

One of the best ways of dealing with the challenge that we have out there environmentally is conservation, and governments should be very aggressive. Our government has taken a number of steps forward in this regard, but all governments have to be even more aggressive in terms of conservation.

The environment minister has been to California recently, and there are some rather remarkable new initiatives taking place there that really could make a huge impact, particularly on individual homes, but also on virtually every business as well, in terms of new batteries, in terms of solar power and so on. These initiatives are happening quickly.

I see that in the province of Alberta the new Premier has said that one of her goals is to reduce coal-burning for the purpose of producing electricity in Alberta.

South of the border, President Obama has introduced many initiatives that are designed, again, to reduce and perhaps someday eliminate the use of coal for the production of electricity.

This is not to say that coal will never be used for any purpose in Ontario, and this bill doesn't address that.

Some people will say, "Well, why do you need a bill of this kind?" You need it because governments—and this is a hard argument for a government side to make, because usually when you're in opposition you make this argument, and that is, the difference between regulation and legislation. When I sat on the other side of the House, I always thought legislation was very important. Now here I am on this side of the House, once again saying that legislation is more important than regulation. I can't claim consistency in all aspects of government policy in this regard, but I can say that in this particular place, I think it's important that a government not be—they say "behind closed doors"; that simply means within cabinet—committees in cabinet. A government cannot make this decision to reopen these plants or start new plants burning coal for the purpose of producing electricity. It would take the consent of this Legislature and a full debate in this legislature, and I think that's good.

I happen to be one who believes—and I have the distinction of being deputy House leader, which is a challenging point in this regard—that having as much debate as reasonable and possible on legislation is very good. I think that the debate we have here is good.

I think there's a good consensus out there now. At one time, some people were fighting it. I used to jokingly say in the House, with interjections at the wrong time, that Old King Coal was a Tory, from "Old King Cole was a merry old soul." But I think there have even been conversions on the road to Damascus over there. Some of the people on the Conservative benches who were very reluctant to end coal recognize its damaging effects in the production of electricity, and I think there's pretty well a consensus now.

My good friend, and the former member for Kitchener-Waterloo, Elizabeth Witmer, was a person who believed in it, and indeed she started the conversion of Lakeview out of the use of coal. I commend her for that, and I have been a long-time champion of her doing that on that occasion.

I think that some of her colleagues have now come along to say that despite the fact that it's very cheap to produce electricity that way in one particular riding or another, perhaps it isn't the way we should go. So I suspect—although I can't tell from the last vote we had in the House; it's hard to say—that in this case it would be unanimous in this regard.

I know that the moderate member who sits across from me, a member elected in 1990, a long time ago—today he looks exactly the way he did when he was elected; I don't know how he does it. He was from Wellington back in those days. He's always had "Wellington" in there; he's got some other names in his riding now. I call him the member for Highway 6, because he advocates on behalf of that.

I'm pleased to have my colleagues and others—we have some medical doctors in this particular caucus who would tell you what the detrimental impacts of burning coal were.

We always talk about clean coal technology. It is an oxymoron to say "clean coal." You really can't clean coal up. You can do certain things with it, but you really can't take out all the contaminants. I remember that even the Economist, which could never be called a left-wing magazine—certainly it would be called very business-oriented—had on the cover a number of years back a picture of coal and a detrimental headline, and the story inside described the negative impact of coal on that occasion.

I'm pleased that I had the opportunity to bring this bill forward, I believe when I was Minister of the Environment, and other Ministers of the Environment had the opportunity to bring it forward. It's the kind of bill I would have thought would pass very quickly in the House, but the debate has been more fulsome than anticipated. I suspect that the debate will be fairly unanimous in this regard.

I'm hopeful that we can now move this bill to its finality, as it should be, and that we will see unanimity—something that is difficult to achieve in this House—among members of all three political parties on not only ending coal, but making sure that in the future it would be extremely difficult to reinstate the use of coal in existing plants—converting—and also in new plants.

I suspect that even the most small-c conservative members of the Conservative caucus would be in favour of this particular piece of legislation, and I encourage them very much to vote in favour of this legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the government side for the two-minute response.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** No? I've got to go around? Questions and comments. My apologies.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much. I thought I got euchred one more time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Well, I picked up the debate in the middle, so it's tough.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, by the way. How are you doing, anyway? Just to get that on the record. Give me some more time on the clock now, eh? We'll get this straight yet.

1700

It's interesting that I'm following the member from the Garden City, St. Catharines, because I have to take exception to some of the things he said earlier today in debate. It's interesting that we're dealing with the ending-of-coal bill, Bill 9. It looked like he meant what he was saying, but I really don't think so. It was just part of the show. Sometimes it's a show here and sometimes it's serious. He was saying that the Conservatives, whenever they have a choice between protecting the environment and not protecting the environment, choose to not protect the environment. I know he can't possibly mean that, because the record of this party over the decades is a stellar one when it comes to the environment. So many of the initiatives that have been taken in this province were taken by Progressive Conservative governments.

I just want to talk for a moment about the coal; I don't have a lot of time. The first regulation to close down a coal plant in this province was the Lakeview coal plant, where my brother James worked in the summers, back in the 1970s. It was taken by then-Environment Minister Elizabeth Witmer in our government, the Mike Harris government.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I commended her.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'm glad you commended her, but then you'll have to retract some of your statements from earlier today.

I just think there is too much politics in here sometimes. And you know me; I'm not into the political things. I just want to talk about the policies and what is good for the people of Ontario and what I can do to help the people in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I want everybody to remember that that's why they came here: to serve the people who voted them in.

So don't chastise the environmental policies of the Progressive Conservatives, because they are most progressive.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'm following the revisionist historian from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

While I'm on my feet, during the last debate I had two residents from my riding, here, Melanie and Evan Tanovich. Evan is a former page. When I first came here, he was a page from my riding, and he was recently appointed to the Ministry of Education student advisory council. He was up all day in the other block learning about his new role. They just had to leave, but they enjoyed the debate earlier.

Getting rid of the coal-burning plants—I remember when this was up before, and I said to the minister, “You’ve already closed the plants, so why is the bill here?” And the minister said, “Well, because we don’t want a future government ever to bring back coal-burning plants in Ontario.” I said at the time, “Well, that makes sense.”

It's like earlier today, when we were talking about banning fracking for shale gas in Ontario. There's none happening now, and the bill would have made sure that a future government couldn't allow it to happen in the future. So I thought anyone who supported the ban in coal would look at that in the same way, because I think we all agree that getting rid of coal has cleaned our air and has protected our environment. Some of us still believe that stopping fracking before it begins will protect our environment for generations to come. I do want to commend the government on the banning of coal.

We can play politics, because this is the place to play politics. There's never too much politics in a political forum, in the Ontario Legislature, because that's what got you here, that's who brought you to the dance. Let's play politics all afternoon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Etobicoke Centre.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I'm not going to play politics; I'm just going to speak to bill for a minute. I think that, at the end of the day, we should be proud of our government's track record on eliminating the coal-fired power plants. I think we've done a service to the people of Ontario in terms of the cost impacts that those plants had on our—

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** On your lungs.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Exactly—as Dr. Qadri just pointed out, on our lungs, on our health and our quality of life. We should be proud of that.

To me, this is just a way of reaffirming that we all support the work that has been done. We don't want to go back to days past when we had those plants in place in Ontario, doing damage to our health and doing damage to our economy. I think this is an excellent initiative. I think it's a way of reaffirming that we're all on the same page on both sides of the aisle.

When I think about it, I just came back from my riding in Etobicoke Centre and was touring Centennial Park. For those of you who don't know Centennial Park, it's acres upon acres upon acres in the northwest end of the city. We were out there with Minister Coteau, touring some of the facilities for the Pan Am Games. One of the things that the minister commented on was how beautiful



it was. We looked out from a hilltop at the beautiful sky, at the nature in front of us, at the parkland, the public space that was being used by families and young people and people of all ages.

When I think about this, I think back to my visit just a couple of hours ago and think about how that beauty, those public spaces, that quality of life is preserved by making sure that we don't bring back the kinds of pollutants, the kinds of damage to our environment, that could threaten that.

To me, this bill is about protecting our health. It's about protecting our quality of life. It's about protecting our economy. I think we should just all get it passed.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I think that we all want clean air, we all want clean water, and we want to ensure that we have clean air and clean water for future generations. But we also understand that it's the entire world. We can't have China building coal plants every week and we're sitting here importing from China and contributing to the pollution in China and trying to pretend that somehow that pollution doesn't make its way to other parts of the world. We all know that it does. So we have to focus on climate change, improving our air quality and our water quality, and focus on the entire globe and the entire weather systems of the entire world. That's number one.

Number two is that, yes, we want to have clean air and clean water and reduce pollution and chemicals that are being ingested by ourselves and future generations, but we don't want to do it in a way that costs the taxpayers. We don't want to do it in a way that benefits private investors, which is what we've seen from the failed green energy policies of this government: that private investors have made money off of the efforts to sell what is going to be a cleaner world. That's very unfortunate.

What we want to see is real efforts being made to ensure that future generations have clean air and clean water in a way that doesn't make us uncompetitive with the rest of the world, which is exactly what we have done.

We need to work together as a global economy. We need to work together with, yes, other provinces. I know the Premier Couillard of Quebec is coming to speak just this Monday at 9 a.m. I think it's going to be wonderful to see him here. Yes, we do want to work with him, as well as all the other Premiers across the country, and the other countries across the globe.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now turn to the government for a two-minute response.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** It's always good to hear the responses from members of the Legislature, and they were generally quite positive. My friend from Barry's Bay, of course, was a little bit on the defensive side, but this is Thursday afternoon. He's permitted to do that. He and I have been good friends for a number of years. We do have our disagreements. But on this, again, I see a good consensus developing.

It's important that we look at all aspects of our society, all of the initiatives that are being taken, and see how we can be much more benign in terms of our impact on our generations to come, but even the present generations.

A lot of changes have been made in the field of the environment. At one time, pollution was called "smoke," for instance. I was born in the city of Sudbury. As a child there, when the smoke, as it was called, came over the city at that time, it choked people. It killed virtually everything around Inco—at that time, it was called Inco. There was virtually no vegetation. Anybody who had any respiratory disease was in real trouble. You'll remember that the space agency in the United States went to Sudbury to practise a moon landing, only because the terrain in those days was similar to what they anticipated finding on the moon.

There's a big difference in Sudbury today. First of all, they built a higher smokestack to send the smoke down to Sturgeon Falls. That wasn't really satisfactory. But we had an opportunity as a government in the 1980s to bring in a non-appealable regulation which compelled a two-thirds reduction in the amount of sulphur dioxide which was produced by the main four sources in Ontario.

1710

We've seen a transformation take place. The arguments were made then: It will cost too much to our society; they're not doing it in China; they're not doing it somewhere else. We did it in the province of Ontario. We took that leadership and, along with co-operation from the federal government, we were able to reduce acid rain to a much lower level than it was in those days.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to have this opportunity this afternoon, when the House is full to listen to our remarks, to debate Bill 9, as we continue second reading debate on the government's Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act.

I'm especially pleased to follow the member for St. Catharines, the Chair of Cabinet, who has served with distinction in this Legislature going back to 1977. He hasn't changed a bit since that time, either. I remember him quite vividly when he served as the Minister of the Environment in the Peterson years. I was privileged to work with my predecessor, Jack Johnson, which allowed me to occasionally come to Queen's Park, although the vast majority of my time was spent in the constituency office, which was actually great training for politics. But occasionally I would be here. I remember the Minister of the Environment of the day. Quite often, it was a very controversial file in those years. Of course, he had the chance later on, when the Liberals formed the government again, to again serve as the Minister of the Environment.

We are talking about environmental legislation, so I want to talk about an important environmental issue in my riding. It was an issue that I brought to the attention of the Minister of the Environment of the day, the

member for St. Catharines, about a year and a half ago, working with the Environmental Commissioner, suggesting that there needed to be more done to ensure the safe disposal of compromised soil. I have a number of communities in my riding where landowners are receiving a substantial number of truckloads of what we would call compromised soil. It was explained to me that there are various degrees of degradation of soil. Really, what we need, I think, is greater action on the part of the provincial government and the leadership to assist municipalities to ensure this soil is being disposed of safely. Bringing this to the attention of the minister through the Environmental Bill of Rights mechanism, I was pleased that the Minister of the Environment, the member for St. Catharines, did, in fact, agree that there needed to be a review of the policy. He told me at that time that there were provincial guidelines, best-practice guidelines that had been recommended by the ministry, and we were pleased that he agreed to the review.

I was told at that time that it would take 12 to 18 months, I think, to complete the review. If my memory is correct, this June is 18 months. So we are looking forward to hearing the response of the ministry on that important issue.

I would express some measure of disappointment, though, because we also approached the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, asking for their participation in the review, because this is an issue that crosses beyond the responsibility of just the Ministry of the Environment. Certainly it was the contention of the Environmental Commissioner—I don't think he will mind me saying this—that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing really had a substantial responsibility for this issue and should have been willing to participate in the review. But certainly we are looking forward to the response from the ministry.

As to my constituents, they were pleased that the review was being launched, but the trucks continue to bring the fill, and have continued to do so over the last 18 months. We're patient to a point, but we would expect prompt action on the part of the Minister of the Environment when that report is finally completed.

**Bill 9:** This is a very important piece of government legislation, of course. I'd like to take the members back in terms of the history of our party's support for the protection of the environment. I believe it was our party that created the Ministry of the Environment in the 1970s, if I'm not mistaken, the government of Bill Davis. I'm pretty sure that's the case.

One of my other predecessors, who served the riding of Wellington-Dufferin, John Root, actually served as the chair of the Ontario Water Resources Commission, which was in many ways the predecessor of the Ministry of the Environment. That commission was set up, and a member of Legislature chaired it. In those days, in many cases, members of the Legislature were involved in participating as chairs of government commissions like that. Mr. Root was a leader in terms of environmental protection. I believe that when the Ministry of the En-

vironment was created in the 1970s, the Ontario Water Resources Commission, the staff and much of the mandate were folded into the new Ministry of the Environment.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** And Norm Sterling and—

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Yes, indeed, and with the support of a number of our Conservative members and, I think, a cross-party consensus.

It's also true that for a significant number of years my former colleague in the Legislature Margaret Marland, who served Mississauga South for years, brought up the issue of the Lakeview generating plant and pushed for some stronger measures to protect the environment and the aired in her riding—supported by Mayor Hazel McCallion and her council. I know that Margaret was very persistent and advocated for that for many years. It's true that it was our government in 2002, and the Minister of the Environment of the day, Elizabeth Witmer, who actually agreed to proceed and ensured that the appropriate action was taken.

I think the Lakeview generating plant was probably the most polluting coal-burning plant in the province at that time. Actually, Elizabeth was given credit by the Ontario Clean Air Alliance for her leadership in this area. I believe it was in 2001 that the minister “issued a legally binding regulation requiring the phase-out of coal burning at the Lakeview generating station in Mississauga by April 2005. In September 2002, when Ernie Eves was Premier, the government of Ontario adopted the goal of phasing-out the province's four remaining coal-fired power plants by 2015. In August 2007 the McGuire government issued a legally binding regulation requiring the complete phase-out of coal burning by December 31, 2014.”

Of course, as the member for St. Catharines mentioned, I think there has been an emerging consensus in this Legislature amongst all three political parties that we needed to move towards the phase-out of coal. But I also remember the election campaign in 2003 quite vividly. Our party was in government; we were seeking re-election. Right off the bat we had trouble during the election campaign. Those of us who had been around for a while knew that it was going to be a difficult challenge for the government to be re-elected but we carried on, of course. I remember quite vividly the Liberal Party taking the position that they would phase out the coal-fired generating plants by 2007.

I remember the discussion that took place in our caucus after that, although I can't divulge exactly what was said—caucus confidentiality—but certainly we had a number of conversations about it. We were advised that the technical experts who knew all about this issue—who worked for the government—had advised the government that it would be technically impossible to close the coal-fired plants by 2007. It was absolutely impossible. It would not be in the public interest to try to do so. However, the Liberal Party, then in opposition and seeking to be elected in 2003, had this as their party policy.

I remember the Liberal candidate who contested my seat in the riding of Waterloo-Wellington, at the all-



candidates meeting in Elmira, getting a great overwhelming endorsement of applause by her supporters who were in the room when she promised and committed to close all the coal-fired plants by 2007. I don't know how many votes turned to support the Liberals on that particular issue, but as we all know, it was impossible to close the coal-fired generating plants by 2007. Before long the government acknowledged that that was the case.

We, of course, on our side of the House pointed that out as a broken promise. As you recall, Mr. Speaker, we were pointing that out quite frequently—that a number of promises had been broken in the first few years of the McGuinty government. It seemed that the promise to close the coal-fired plants by 2007 was broken, and it was broken again because another date had been set. In the end, it took until 2014-2015—roughly what we were told at the time in that caucus meeting that I recall quite vividly.

I think it's important that all of us be responsible with our election promises. I point that out to remind all of us that we have to demonstrate integrity in terms of election promises so as to be deserving and earning of the public trust.

I know that Elizabeth Witmer, as Minister of the Environment, was very passionate about this. She wanted to proceed with the policy. It was also well known to us that approximately half of the air pollution in Ontario was not generated in Ontario. It was coming from, primarily, I think, coal-burning in the United States.

Really, we knew that if we took this step it would make a substantial difference in terms of the quality of the air that we breathe in Ontario, but to assume that it was going to solve the problem, that we could do it by ourselves—because of the natural geography of the North American continent, obviously that would not be the case.

1720

I know that some felt that if we closed our coal-burning plants, then we would somehow have the moral authority to go to the American jurisdictions and challenge them to do the same and then they would do it. Well, of course, as we know, I don't think that it's going to work that way, or that it has worked that way. But, at the same time, we have, I think, taken the proper steps in Ontario to close our coal-burning plants.

The member for St. Catharines talked about the importance of conservation. As a Progressive Conservative, I believe in conservation, too. I don't know why we as individuals or as companies in the marketplace or governments—why any of us would want to waste anything. Certainly conservation of our natural resources, conservation of our electricity, conservation of all of our resources should be a high priority for all of us. I believe that's a Progressive Conservative value. I think that, certainly, we need to take greater steps to encourage conservation.

Now, I want to get back to the bill. As we know, "The bill amends the Environmental Protection Act by adding

a new Part VI.1. Section 59.2 prohibits the use of coal to generate electricity at certain specified generation facilities after December 31, 2014." Of course, that was last December. "The greater fines set out in subsections 187(4) and (5) of the act apply in respect of a conviction for breach of the prohibition...."

"Section 59.3 generally prohibits the use of coal at generation facilities to generate electricity after December 31, 2014. This prohibition does not apply in respect of two types of generation facilities. One type is a generation facility at a facility that produces a product other than electricity or steam where the generation of electricity is not the primary purpose of the facility. The other type is a generation facility that uses heat, steam or by-product gas from another facility that produces a product other than electricity or steam where the generation of electricity is not the primary purpose of the other facility.

"The power to make regulations exempting any person or thing from any provision of the act does not apply to a generation facility that uses coal to generate electricity unless the facility is of a type that is similar to the type that is exempted under section 59.3."

Well, what does all that mean? Again, in essence, they are prohibiting the use of coal to generate electricity in the province of Ontario.

Our caucus has expressed support for the principle of this bill, and when the vote takes place I hope to be here to support the bill at second reading. But I also think it's important that the bill be sent to committee and that we give the public an opportunity to participate in public hearings. I think, generally speaking, our legislation is improved by the public process that takes place at standing committees. It's important that groups that have perhaps advocated for this for years would be given the opportunity to express their ideas and, in some cases, perhaps, suggestions for amendments. All of that is part of the process, and it allows for us to ensure that the legislation—that we get it right and that, in fact, it is legislation that will stand up under the test of time. I would think that that would be an important part of this.

The summary of the bill: The bill bans the burning of coal at power generating stations in Ontario by the end of 2014, as I said earlier. If passed, Bill 9 gives the government the ability to impose heavy fines on any person or company that burns coal at a power plant for the purpose of generating power after the end of 2014.

Of course, I think that it's very unlikely that those measures will be necessary, that those penalties will ever be transacted. I suspect there will be a high degree of observance of the law when and if this bill is passed in some form.

Of course, again, exceptions are made for facilities that produce "a product other than electricity or steam where the generation of electricity is not the primary purpose" and facilities that use "heat, steam or by-product gas" from said facilities.

Some of the issues that our caucus has raised about this issue that I think need to be restated in the context of

this debate: We have said that Bill 9 doesn't address how to reduce private sector coal use. Reducing this source of coal pollution represents a real opportunity to clean up Ontario's air. The cement industry has been calling upon the government for some time to make regulatory changes that will allow them to use alternative fuels in cement kilns, and I believe there has been some response on the part of the government in that regard. Certainly I'd be interested in hearing more from the government as to—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Yes, in that regard. That's been a long ask of the cement industry. I remember, going back to the late 1980s, the cement industry was looking for alternative fuels and alternative disposal of things that were difficult to dispose of. They requested, for years, for a pilot project to burn used tires in the production of cement, and it seems to me that the government was persistently turning that down for some reason. But obviously, if the government has made some steps in that direction, we'd be interested in learning more about their plans.

The term "alternative fuels" refers to types of non-recyclable materials like shingles and certain plastics which could be used as a fuel source when making cement.

I want to talk about power plant conversions for a minute. Bill 9 sets out no plans to convert existing coal plants into natural gas or biomass facilities. We have said that the Liberals appear not to have an idea as to how to balance growing our economy and protecting the environment. Any serious piece of legislation would have addressed how to preserve jobs by converting coal plants into natural gas and biomass power generating stations, like the former Auditor General recommended.

We've also said that phasing out coal started with a regulation, as I said before, issued by former Progressive Conservative Environment Minister Elizabeth Witmer to shut down the Lakeview generating station. Since then, the Liberals have continued to phase out coal units at the province's remaining coal-fired plants. All parties have supported the idea of phasing out coal.

When Elizabeth Witmer was the Minister of the Environment, I was privileged to serve as her parliamentary assistant for a time. I remember those years quite vividly. Her passion to protect the environment was something that was very inspiring for all of her staff. I know the deputy minister at the time, Jan Rush, has also been recognized by the Ontario Clean Air Alliance for the work that was done in those days.

I know we've got a tendency as members to assume and think that nothing important happened here before we arrived as members. The day we were elected, all of a sudden, things started to happen. It's important to realize that we do stand on the shoulders of our predecessors, and there was a lot of good work done in the past on issues like the environment. Certainly with all three political parties having been in power in the time that I've been privileged to serve here, in every case each would

point to some significant achievements in terms of environmental protection as things that they're proud of and as legacies for their particular political party.

In our time in government, the work that was done by Norm Sterling as the Minister of the Environment—in so many ways, he did a great job.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** And before that, the Niagara Escarpment.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Well, he was the father of the Niagara Escarpment Commission; that's what he told us, and I think that's a fair statement. A lot of work was done when he was, I believe, the Provincial Secretary, if I'm not mistaken—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Provincial Secretary for Resources Development.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:**—for Resources Development—thank you very much for that—in the Davis government in those years. So we've certainly had a strong tradition within our party. A number of our initiatives in terms of protection of the environment have held up over time and are things that we are very proud of.

When we're talking about clean air, I think I have to put a few comments on the record about the government's commitment to initiate this cap-and-trade scheme. We have the Premier of Quebec coming to address the Ontario Legislature on Monday morning, and I certainly look forward to hearing from him. I think it's a great thing that the Premier of Quebec is coming here. I think it's going to be an important addition to the discussions that we'll have in the next few weeks. I welcome a stronger relationship between the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec—indeed, all the provinces—to the extent that we can encourage greater co-operation and coordination within our policies in the federation. Obviously, I believe that's in the public interest.

I know the government is quite proud of their commitment to enter into this cap-and-trade arrangement with the province of Quebec and the state of California, but we have a lot of concerns about it because we believe it will drive up the cost of doing business in the province of Ontario; there's no question about that. If we're going to maintain an effective manufacturing capability in the province, we have to be paying attention to the various competitive pressures that our manufacturers face on a whole range of issues. In my current role as critic to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade—we talk about this all the time—we have lost something like 300,000 manufacturing jobs in recent years, something that I was highlighting and bringing to the attention of the Legislature going back to, I think, 2005, even before the recession, because I was hearing from manufacturers, especially with the strengthening Canadian dollar at that time, that they were going to be facing real challenges. In fact, we've seen the hollowing out of our manufacturing sector.

1730

Our provincial policy has to be able to, as a goal, find the balance that protects the environment while at the same time allowing our industries to compete success-



fully and to be able to create the jobs that we need. Manufacturing traditionally has been a source of good-paying—in many cases very-good-paying—middle-class jobs. The jobs that have been created in recent years, post recession, in many cases do not pay at the same average rate. For example, we lost an important employer in our community, the A.O. Smith plant, where the workers were making a good wage. The jobs that are being created in the service industry, Tim Hortons, for example—obviously those jobs exist, but the people who are being asked to take them are not being paid at the same level.

Unfortunately, I've run out of time and I recognize that you're ready to call for questions and comments, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for your indulgence; I do appreciate it. Certainly my interest in this bill will continue, and I hope to be here to support it at second reading.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It's always a treat to follow the member from Wellington-Halton Hills, one of the most distinguished gentlemen in the House, as are you, Speaker—proof that you don't have to pound the table and raise your voice to get your point across in this Legislature.

When we talk about banning coal-burning plants, when we talk about polling—you know, you do polling to find out what the issues are that are important to people—the environment is always near the top. It's very important. In my area, in Canada South—I mean, the Raptors are, "We the North." Well, down in Canada South, "We the South." But we have bad air blowing over from the coal-burning plants in American states. We know the science was there when the government finally banned coal-burning plants. We know the science was there, unlike when we were talking earlier this afternoon about fracking. There is no science on fracking yet.

In fact, a year ago this week, the Globe and Mail ran a headline: "Go Slow on Fracking, Scientists Warn." The article, by Shawn McCarthy and Ivan Semeniuk, started like this: "Canadians face a Pandora's box of potential environmental and health risks as the oil industry charges forward with hydraulic fracturing techniques that are needed to unlock vast natural gas and oil deposits across the country, says a new report for the federal government."

The report was commissioned way back in 2011, when former environmental minister Peter Kent was there. He wanted to know the impacts of shale gas development in Canada. The independent experts who did the study concluded that development needed to go slow so science could catch up to the impacts that are being documented.

Speaker, it just seems to me that when we talk about getting rid of coal-burning plants or putting a ban on fracturing, we do it for future generations, at least when the science is known; until the science is known, we have to go slow.

Thank you for your time, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Etobicoke North.

**M. Shafiq Qaadri:** J'ai le plaisir de parler de ce projet de loi.

My colleagues have highlighted many of the issues here. I would, with your permission, Speaker, like to speak not only in my capacity as a physician but also as a parliamentarian—but mostly as an MD.

This is one of the major landmark and legacy pieces, I think, that the government of Ontario, in its various incarnations, one and two, is going to be able to leave the people of Ontario. Something on the order of the equivalent of the pollution of two million cars has been removed by virtue of the annihilation and annulment of coal-fired gas plants. We're talking about an extraordinary benefit to human health, animal health, plant health; for example, the provocations of asthma. We know that something on the order of 500 Canadians, unfortunately, still die of asthma; there are two million unscheduled urgent care visits because of asthma. And whether it's concentration of pollution, concentration of populations—and, of course, all that means in terms of particulate matter, carbon pollution, industrial pollution—this affects the lungs. These particles come into our systems. They sit; they simmer; they cook; they percolate. This, of course, is an added reason for not only asthma and COPD but also downstream development of things like cancer and, as we call the group of illnesses, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

These are very real issues, Speaker, and I'm very proud to be part of the Premier McGuinty government, the Premier Wynne government and counting, to help eliminate this massive yet avoidable input into human health. I can tell you, as a doctor who treats these illnesses, as an individual who sees within my own family its consequences, we need to support this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I only have two minutes for a response, but I do want to take a moment to introduce a special guest I have in the west members' gallery today. I didn't bring him in for question period, because he was working—he's one of the few Ontarians who has a job in Kathleen Wynne's Ontario—my son Lucas, who is here for the very first time. I've been here almost 12 years, and this is the first time he ever got to the members' gallery.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, it's a long way.

But I want to talk about the coal bill, and now I'm down to a minute 18. I remember when I was campaigning in 2003, and the big promise from the Dalton McGuinty Liberals at the time was that they were going to close coal by 2007. There was not a single credible energy expert out there who said it was even possible. In fact, my predecessor, Sean Conway, who was the energy critic, wanted nothing to do with that promise, because he knew enough to know that it was not remotely possible—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** He's your cousin, right?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** He is—not remotely possible, yet this party continued to campaign on it. Why? Because they campaigned on the politics, not on what was doable or best for Ontario. They wanted to talk about things that were impossible, hoping that they would attract a new group of supporters to the party during that election. Well, it worked.

And then the promise became 2011, 2013, now 2014–15. You know, Ernie Eves at the time had a coal shutdown promise, too, and it was 2015. Now, isn't that remarkable? Here we are in 2015 and we actually have shut down the coal plants. I wonder who was telling the truth.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** You know, there's a difference and contrast between the presentation of the member from Wellington–Halton Hills and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke's. But they're both very good speakers and very informative when they debate in the House. So I did want to thank the member from Wellington–Halton Hills for his presentation. It was very well received.

I think the bottom line, Speaker, is that we're talking about the environment and we're talking about ways to help the environment, to make sure that it's here for our children, the next generation. The member from—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Windsor–Tecumseh. How soon they forget.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** —Windsor–Tecumseh made a very good point. Way back when, we were putting all kinds of things into our rivers and lakes, not even thinking—our garbage, our waste products, fuel. We didn't actually even think that that made a difference, but we know better now. That's what I think his point was, that we're doing things to the environment. And you have to be cognizant of what that reaction will be or what the consequence will be in the future. Just to keep that in mind.

One thing we're talking about is ending coal for cleaner air. That actually just makes sense, because now we know that coal is dirty air, and nobody wants to breathe in dirty air. It isn't good for our health. It's not good for the environment—we talk about vegetation. So I encourage everyone here in this chamber to go out into their communities and promote the environment and do something good for your environment. We've got recycling, planting trees, passing bills like this one today. There are many, many things we can do for the environment for the future, but I think we have to learn from what we've done in the past and we have to think smarter, so when we do things like ending coal plants for cleaner air, it only makes sense.

I'm glad this has been brought forward, and we look forward to supporting it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Wellington–Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I want to express my appreciation to the members who responded to my presentation: the member for Windsor–Tecumseh, the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and the member for London–Fanshawe.

**1740**

The member for Windsor–Tecumseh and the member for London–Fanshawe, thank you very much for your kind remarks. I would say to the member for Windsor–Tecumseh that he is one of the gentlemen of this House, too, and always brings a thoughtful presentation into this Legislature with everything he says and everything he does. The member for London–Fanshawe, thank you as well. She's the same. She does a great job on behalf of her constituents, as was shown today with the passage of her private member's initiative. She deserves congratulations for that.

The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, the physician-politician, thank you very much—

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** North.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Etobicoke North, rather. He mentioned his perspective and his experience as a physician. I think, obviously, that's something that is helpful to this debate and is appreciated.

The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke reiterated his recollections of the 2003 election in a very eloquent manner. Of course, most of us who were around in that election have a similar recollection, but at the same time I think it's important that we do hold the government to account for its previous election promises.

One of the members—I think it was the member for Windsor–Tecumseh—talked about their obligation to future generations. I would say that I agree, as a father of three sons. My wife and I have three boys: Jack is almost 20 years old; Phillip is almost 18; and our youngest, Dean, is 16 years old. I obviously spend a lot of time thinking about their futures, and not just the future of my own sons, but the future of their generation, all of our children and all of our grandchildren.

I think that we, as legislators, need to remind ourselves from time to time that while we look at the electoral cycle, and many of us have plans going forward for the next three years, expecting that the election will come in 2018, we have an obligation and a responsibility to look beyond that and think about the long-term implications of the decisions that we make here, not just on the environment, but also on the finances of the province. Of course, we'll hear more about that in the coming days and weeks as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I just want to say before I begin that the member from Wellington–Halton Hills and also the minister without portfolio on the Liberal side—we always say this when we stand up, that it's an honour and a privilege to speak on behalf our constituents and the people of Ontario, but it really is an honour and privilege also to be in this House with people who have such institutional memory and experience. I just want to say



thank you for your experience and institutional memory, because when those members stand and speak about something, we actually learn something about our own history. It's difficult to find out, really, in many ways, about Ontario's history in this Legislature without that. We really should do better on teaching in our educational institutions about our history.

For example, I didn't know that it was Elizabeth Witmer who closed a coal-fired plant. I found that very interesting. Again, you learn here.

What we're dealing with here, of course, is Bill 9. It's kind of an after-the-fact bill, because the coal-fired plants have been closed. I listened, of course, with interest, also, to the member from Etobicoke North when he was talking about the health effects, and there's nothing more true than that. Certainly asthma rates are through the roof. I remember, as a young parent who, at that point, was living in the Beach area of Toronto with my children, that it seemed like every second child in that classroom was on a puffer of some sort. We know how devastating and, in fact, fatal that disease can be. Again, it's directly attributable to what you're breathing in.

Way, way back in the day—in fact, everybody probably in this Legislature can point to the time when they became socially active or politically active, and what that issue was. Certainly for me the issue was the environment. I remember as a teenager watching a phenomenal CBC documentary, a really, really interesting documentary. Back in those days, they didn't talk about climate change—they didn't use those words—but they did talk about pollution and they did talk about the state of our water, the state of our air, the state of our earth, and the fact that this planet has finite resources and an ever-expanding population. We also, of course, have an economic system that's forever growing. It's growing and it needs to grow, and it's consuming, and we're consuming those resources at greater and greater rates per person, year to year.

You don't have to be a rocket scientist, as they say, to figure out that something has got to give, that we cannot continue to consume the way we have over generations and generations of human life on this planet and still have a planet that we can pass on to our children. It's not going to happen.

One of the sad realities, and I think it is a reality—certainly, the most depressing evening you can spend these days is with an environmentalist, because anybody will tell you how dire it is and how we really are the generation that is charged with doing something—finally. I mean every generation, of course, was, but now we have the information.

I would hope it's impossible, certainly in this chamber, to deny that climate change is real and caused by humans. Certainly I hope in this chamber some sure facts about the environment are absolutely incontrovertible. The question is: What are we going to do with those facts? We are the generation, we are the legislators who sit right now—federally, provincially, in the States and everywhere in the world—that are charged with

doing something about it. If we don't, we pass on, really, quite a cataclysm for our children.

I remember going down to the States and attending a Council of State Governments conference where one of the speakers was speaking about the fact that extreme weather events used to happen now and then—maybe even per generation, that have some devastating extreme weather event. Now in the States they're preparing, in terms of a budget, for one a month—one a month. Think about the toll of that on our economy. Think about the toll of that on human life. Think about the flooding just in Toronto that happens in our basements. Think about the winter we just went through, the extreme summers that we get, the kind of weather that is just genuinely weird, that people haven't seen before, that we're seeing now routinely around the world. This is what we're talking about when we're talking about the environment.

We're also talking about running out of those finite resources. The theory always was that technology would get to the point—some of us are old enough to remember the Jetsons. You remember the idea that in some halcyon future we'd all be flying around, we could get out of here, we'd be travelling? If we pollute this planet, there are other planets. Surely, there is life on Mars; we'll be setting up colonies. All of that—apart from those who go to ComiCon—it's not so real anymore. What is real is, we're stuck here. This is all we have. If we don't look after it and pass it on to our children, we have nothing; absolutely nothing.

Right now, I have constituents in my riding, many of them elderly, who are renters who pay more for their hydro every month than they do for their rent. They're on fixed incomes and they can't afford it anymore. We won't get into the privatization of hydro, which of course, as you know, we virulently oppose and will consistently in the New Democratic Party, but one of the reasons for that is the huge cost overruns for a nuclear industry—the refurbishments at Darlington etc. are what you're paying for when you're getting that bill.

We heard today in question period the member from Toronto—Danforth talk about the side effects of that industry, and the side effects—apart from the Fukushima of the world, which of course are shocking and devastating—are the production of nuclear waste. Today, we heard that that nuclear waste is going to be buried next to one of our Great Lakes. We heard that the only environmental assessment that could be done on it is federal. We know that the federal government has gutted the environmental assessment process. Think about it. This is in the member from Huron—Bruce's riding. This is going to happen in her riding, next to one of her lakes. This is prime territory, and we know that nothing will ever happen to that nuclear waste. It doesn't go away. It doesn't dissolve. We don't have an answer to that. We have no answer to that, other than to bury it. This is not an environmental answer. So there is a classic case in point.

To return to the bill, the bill, of course, about banning coal—a good thing. I hearken back to the member from

Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and others who have mentioned it—yes, I too was elected in 2006 and I remember the promise: 2007, then 2011, then 2014. I remember it was always sometime in the future, never quite now. It's good that it finally got done, I have to say. It's good that it finally got done; good that the bill prevents it from ever recurring. That's a good thing.

1750

One of the ugly secrets about our friends in Europe is the continuing use of coal, even in countries that have moved to renewables at an incredible rate. Even countries in Europe that are using renewables are still using coal—an ugly little secret about power in Europe. I think we have to take credit in this province: We don't have that ugly little secret anymore.

Is there more to be done? Oh, my goodness, yes. One of our members just mentioned Gord Miller, the Environmental Commissioner. I want to give a shout-out to Gord Miller, who is retiring out of his job, a phenomenal Environmental Commissioner who has done phenomenal work. He's done it for many, many years, and I want to point to some of that work, where some of the promises of this government are concerned.

We forget that at the same time that the government promised to phase out coal, they also committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels. That was also a concomitant promise back then. And that was to 166 megatonnes. That's a lot. Think about it: One megatonne is equal to a million tonnes. So below 1990 levels by 2020, and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. In July 2014, Gord Miller, that selfsame Environmental Commissioner, reported that while the government was projected to meet its 2014 emissions targets, it will not even come close to meeting its 2020 targets. Apart from closing the coal plants, he said, "Very little has been achieved ... in fact, we have gone backwards."

In September 2014, the government released its most recent greenhouse gas projections, which weren't available to the Environmental Commissioner when he wrote his report. The situation has improved somewhat, and now the government is projected to exceed its greenhouse gas targets by 19 megatonnes instead of 28 megatonnes. What this still means, Mr. Speaker, is that in 2020 Ontario will exceed target emissions by more megatonnes than all the greenhouse gas reductions achieved in the electricity sector since 1990, even with all the coal plant closures.

You know what? I'm going to repeat that, because I know there are lots of side conversations going on, but I know that the people watching at home, particularly those who are really interested in climate change and the environment, will pay attention to the salient fact, the critical fact. This deal means that in 2020 Ontario will exceed target emissions by more megatonnes than all the greenhouse gas reductions achieved in the electricity sector since 1990, even with all the coal plant closures. This is a problem. This is a problem, and we need to do something about it. We need to do something about it.

In May 2014, the amount of carbon dioxide in the air exceeded the symbolic milestone of 400 parts per million, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This is a level that has not been seen in—get this—800,000 years. In 2012, the world emitted a record 34.5 billion metric tonnes of carbon dioxide from fossil fuels. Coal was the largest contributor to that, but of course there are others. So we've got a problem. We still have a problem. We still have a problem that needs immediate attention.

Let's talk about some of the aspects of that. There are small stories among big stories here. I mentioned the burying of nuclear waste. That is a story ongoing. That's something we could do something about. We could weigh in with an environmental assessment.

NoJetsTO—a big issue in my riding and a big issue among all the lakefront ridings and others—it should be a big issue for all of us—about putting jets at the Toronto airport. Again, the province owns the lakebed. That's part of it. The province could do an environmental assessment. We have called for that environmental assessment. So has NoJetsTO. The answer we get is that this is federal only. It's not federal only. We have a vested stake in this in Ontario. We should be doing all we can.

Listen, I don't know about anybody else in this Legislature, but we, among others, in the New Democratic Party do not trust Stephen Harper and his government where environmental issues are concerned. We cannot pass the buck and say, "Leave it to the feds," because we know the feds are doing nothing about it. In fact, they're moving backwards. They are moving backwards, and there's no question about that.

Meanwhile, this is going on literally in our own backyard, in our own province. These are issues that are happening here. These are issues we should be out in front of, we should be doing something about, we should be calling for an environmental assessment on. That's what we should do.

In my own riding, with the Union Pearson Express, believe me, our phones are ringing off the hook. It's now running every 15 minutes, 24/7, right through Liberty Village, right past the backyards of those who live in my riding, past parks, past schools. Not my riding alone—Laura Albanese in York South–Weston. There are a number of ridings that it's running through—Trinity–Spadina and others. It's going to be running on diesel. No jurisdiction in the world is investing in diesel trains except for Bangladesh and us. What are we doing? This is in our own backyard.

By the way, it's not a relief route for those who want to use it to get downtown. No. It's just airport and back, at exorbitant rates that very few can afford. That will be a white elephant, mark my words, and we will be paying for that as taxpayers: paying to pollute.

What can we do? These are local issues. These are provincial issues that we could do something about. It's extremely important.

Today I was happy to see that the member from Toronto–Danforth's anti-fracking bill passed, because,



like this bill—very much like this bill, in a sense—what he’s attempting to do is to prevent fracking from being part of the Ontario provincial scene. That’s a very good thing. The argument, “Well, it’s not happening yet,” to me, doesn’t hold water, literally water that will be polluted by fracking. It doesn’t work, because the reality is that it could happen here. As long as it could happen—and it shouldn’t happen—we can act to prevent it from happening. That’s what we’re tasked with as legislators. Again, I can’t emphasize how important this is.

From my teenage years to now, looking at the world, looking at Canada and looking at us, I can say that we have failed miserably. My generation, we—most of us boomers in this place—have failed miserably to protect the planet and to also protect future generations who want to live on this planet. We’ve failed. So it’s tasked to us that we start doing something, and “everything” is the answer to what we should be doing, as much as we can.

To get back, again: Is this bill good? Absolutely, it’s good. It points to something that has been done, something good that’s been done. We hoped it would have been done earlier. Originally it was supposed to be 2007, then 2011, but finally it is done. That’s a good thing. That’s a start. It’s a start.

One of the members in the Conservative Party talked about cap-and-trade. We are looking forward to hearing the details about said cap-and-trade, because honestly, to this day, I haven’t seen those details. Let’s see the details; let’s see the action. My goodness, that’s the call upon us from every environmentalist: Let’s see the action. Our children and their children and their children’s children will look back at this generation, at this Legislature, at the one in Ottawa and ones in jurisdictions around the world, and say, “What did you do?” Because if we don’t do it, it may be too late. As I say, if you want

a depressing evening, spend it with an environmentalist talking about the environment and climate change. That will really depress you.

Here’s the big picture, and here’s another fact that one should really take home: In 2010, global leaders attended the UN Cancun Climate Change Conference and agreed to limit global warming to two degrees. This commitment included a pledge to reduce carbon emissions below a specified target.

In November 2014, a UN report noted that Canada was one of only four countries, along with Australia, Mexico and the United States, that is not on track to meeting their emissions reductions. We should be ashamed, as Canadians, about this. Yet we see federally—just pick up one issue: the Keystone XL pipeline, which even President Obama vetoes, which is supported by both the Liberal and Conservative Parties. Shame—

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** And Gary Doer.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** And Gary Doer—yes, sad; shameful, I say. Shameful, absolutely.

Just to sum up: A good thing? Yes. We’re going to vote for it; of course we will. Is there so much more to be done? Oh, my goodness, yes—locally, provincially and federally that we not only should do, but we have to do. As I said before, this is the most defining issue of our generation—climate change and the environment—and we will have to answer to future ones. I hope that answer is a good one.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, May 11, and, I’ll remind everyone once more, 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brook	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



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Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
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Soo Wong  
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Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
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Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi  
Todd Smith  
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permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
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**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short





## Northern Ontario

Mme France Gélinas .....	4197
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4197

## Forest industry

Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4197
Hon. Bill Mauro .....	4197

## Highway safety

Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	4198
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4198

## Children's mental health services

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4198
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4198

## Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4199
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4199
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4199
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4199

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4199
Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4199
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4199
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4200
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4200
Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4200

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Lyme disease

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4200
----------------------------	------

### Correctional facility employees

Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4200
------------------------------	------

### Mother's Day

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4200
--------------------------	------

### Connor Ross

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4201
------------------------	------

### Labour disputes

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4201
-------------------------	------

### Community services

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4201
--------------------------------	------

### Concord Food Centre

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4201
------------------------	------

### Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day

Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4202
---------------------------	------

### BlackBerry

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4202
----------------------------	------

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

### Protecting Victims of Occupational Disease Act, 2015, Bill 98, Ms. French / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des victimes de maladies professionnelles, projet de loi 98, Mme French

First reading agreed to .....	4203
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4203

## MOTIONS

### Private members' public business

Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4203
Motion agreed to .....	4203

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

### Children's Mental Health Week / Semaine de la santé mentale des enfants

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4203
-----------------------------	------

### Asian Heritage Month

Hon. Michael Chan .....	4204
-------------------------	------

### Children's Mental Health Week

Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4204
------------------------	------

### Asian Heritage Month

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4205
------------------------	------

### Children's Mental Health Week

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4205
-------------------------	------

### Asian Heritage Month

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4206
-------------------------------	------

### Correction of record

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4206
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4206

## PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

### Hydro rates

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4206
------------------------	------

### Gasoline prices

Mme France Gélinas .....	4206
--------------------------	------

### Water fluoridation

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4207
----------------------------	------

### Demonstration at Queen's Park

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4207
------------------------	------

### First responders

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4207
--------------------------	------

### GO Transit

Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4207
------------------------------	------

## **Ontario Retirement Pension Plan**

Mrs. Julia Munro ..... 4208

## **Special-needs children**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky ..... 4208

## **Student safety**

Mrs. Cristina Martins ..... 4208

## **Health care funding**

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 4208

## **Hospital funding**

Mme France Gélinas ..... 4209

## **French-language education**

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn ..... 4209

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, Bill 95, Ms. Armstrong / Loi de 2015 sur l'amélioration des services de santé mentale et de lutte contre les dépendances en Ontario, projet de loi 95, Mme Armstrong**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 4210

Mr. Han Dong ..... 4211

Ms. Sylvia Jones ..... 4212

Ms. Peggy Sattler ..... 4213

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry ..... 4213

Mrs. Gila Martow ..... 4214

Mme France Gélinas ..... 4215

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris ..... 4215

Ms. Cindy Forster ..... 4216

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 4216

### **Safeguarding our Communities Act (Fentanyl Patch for Patch Return Policy), 2015, Bill 33, Mr. Fedeli / Loi de 2015 pour protéger nos collectivités (politique d'échange de timbres de fentanyl), projet de loi 33, M. Fedeli**

Mr. Victor Fedeli ..... 4217

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky ..... 4218

Hon. Dipika Damerla ..... 4220

Ms. Laurie Scott ..... 4220

Mme France Gélinas ..... 4221

Ms. Harinder Malhi ..... 4222

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 4222

Ms. Soo Wong ..... 4223

Mr. Victor Fedeli ..... 4224

### **Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Amendment Act (Anti- Fracking), 2015, Bill 82, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 modifiant la Loi sur les ressources en pétrole, en gaz et en sel (anti-fracturation), projet de loi 82, M. Tabuns**

Mr. Peter Tabuns ..... 4224

Ms. Eleanor McMahon ..... 4226

Mr. Robert Bailey ..... 4226

Mr. Percy Hatfield ..... 4227

Mr. Bob Delaney ..... 4228

Mr. John Yakabuski ..... 4228

Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 4229

Mr. Tim Hudak ..... 4230

Mr. Rick Nicholls ..... 4230

Hon. James J. Bradley ..... 4230

Mr. Peter Tabuns ..... 4231

### **Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, Bill 95, Ms. Armstrong / Loi de 2015 sur l'amélioration des services de santé mentale et de lutte contre les dépendances en Ontario, projet de loi 95, Mme Armstrong**

Second reading agreed to ..... 4231

### **Safeguarding our Communities Act (Fentanyl Patch for Patch Return Policy), 2015, Bill 33, Mr. Fedeli / Loi de 2015 pour protéger nos collectivités (politique d'échange de timbres de fentanyl), projet de loi 33, M. Fedeli**

Second reading agreed to ..... 4232

### **Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Amendment Act (Anti- Fracking), 2015, Bill 82, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 modifiant la Loi sur les ressources en pétrole, en gaz et en sel (anti-fracturation), projet de loi 82, M. Tabuns**

Second reading agreed to ..... 4232

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

### **Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, 2015, Bill 9, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur l'abandon du charbon pour un air plus propre, projet de loi 9, M. Murray**

Ms. Eleanor McMahon ..... 4232

Hon. Dipika Damerla ..... 4233

Hon. James J. Bradley ..... 4233

Mr. John Yakabuski ..... 4235

Mr. Percy Hatfield ..... 4235

Mr. Yvan Baker ..... 4235

Mrs. Gila Martow ..... 4236

Hon. James J. Bradley ..... 4236

Mr. Ted Arnott ..... 4236

Mr. Percy Hatfield ..... 4240

M. Shafiq Qaadri ..... 4240

Mr. John Yakabuski ..... 4240

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 4241

Mr. Ted Arnott ..... 4241

Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 4241

Second reading debate deemed adjourned ..... 4244



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 7 May 2015 / Jeudi 7 mai 2015

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### 2015 Ontario budget / Budget de l'Ontario de 2015

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4175
Ms. Soo Wong .....	4175
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4175
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4176
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4176
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4177
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4180
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4181
Mme France Gélinas .....	4181
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4181
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4182
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4182
Hon. Michael Chan .....	4183
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4184
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4185
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4185
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4185
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4186
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4186
Debate deemed adjourned .....	4186

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4186
Hon. Michael Chan .....	4187
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4187
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	4187
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4187
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4187
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4187
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4187
Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4187
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4187
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4187
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4187

### Order of business

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4187
-------------------------------------	------

### Privatization of public assets

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4187
-------------------------------------	------

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4188
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4189

### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4189
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4190
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4190

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4190
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4190

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4191
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4191

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4192
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4192

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4193
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4193

### Children's mental health services / Services de santé mentale pour enfants

Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4193
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4194
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4194

### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4194
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4194
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4195

### Nuclear waste

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4195
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4195

### Apprenticeship training

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4195
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	4196

### Justice of the peace

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4196
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4196

*Continued on inside back cover*



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of Ontario**

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**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 11 May 2015**

**Lundi 11 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 11 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 11 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'd like to introduce to the House my sister Marlene Yakabuski, and my brother Mark.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to introduce to the House my right hand here in Toronto, my EA, Victoria Stevenson.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to introduce, in the west members' gallery, my wife, Elizabeth, and a good friend of ours, Marilyn Whiting from Sarnia-Lambton.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Speaker, you know we had a significant event on the weekend. The new leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party is with us today: Patrick Brown.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Two introductions, Speaker:

I want to welcome a former Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Bob Rae, to the House. Welcome, Mr. Rae.

I'd also like to welcome a former member of provincial Parliament from Perth-Wellington, John Wilkinson.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I won't consider that stepping on one of my jobs.

Further introductions?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I'd like to welcome to the House my intern, Justin Khorana.

0910

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** It's my pleasure to introduce Sylvie Landry from Durham region. She's a membre du Conseil scolaire Viamonde and an excellent advocate in Durham region. Welcome.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'd like to introduce Richard Ciano, the president of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** It's with great pleasure that I introduce the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Don McCabe, in the members' east gallery today.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'd like to introduce Earl Provost, the former executive assistant to Toronto's deputy mayor Norm Kelly.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'aimerais présenter M. Denis Vaillancourt, le président de l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, qui est ici avec nous ce matin.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, it's my great honour to welcome the former Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable John Turner.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I would like to introduce to the House now-retired Senator Di Nino, founder of Parliamentary Friends of Tibet.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I wish to introduce former MPP Steve Gilchrist.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'd like to welcome my sister Marisue Gardonio, who is here in her capacity as the chair of the Ontario Road Builders' Association, and my nephew Aaron Natyshak, who is going to be interning with me. He's a student at Bowling Green State University.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** It's my pleasure to introduce Robert Beaudin, the principal of l'Académie Alexandre-Dumas.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I'd like to introduce Mr. Walied Solimon, Mr. Mike Richmond, Shane Hefron, Brock Pearson and, of course, Tamara McGregor to the Legislature.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd like to welcome everyone else, if anyone got left out.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I'd like to introduce my good friend Stewart Kiff et sa délégation francophone, and Max Beck, the spouse of Barbara Hall. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Bob Stanley, who is here joining us as campaign manager to Patrick Brown, and of course, everybody else who hasn't been introduced. Welcome.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce a guest in the Speaker's gallery, a long-time friend of mine—we served as legislative pages together back in 1991—Katie Telford. Welcome.

**Mr. Harinder S. Takhar:** I would like to introduce Gurdev Gill and Manjit Gill from Brampton.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'd like to introduce Maxim Jean-Louis, the CEO and executive director of Contact North, a great educational institution in the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Leave it right to the end—the Auditor General.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais présenter—  
*Interjections.*

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** The auditor? Everything is clean. No problem. The government has—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** My forgiveness; the Attorney General.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais présenter le président du Collège Boréal, Pierre Riopel.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As ordered on May 6, this House is now adjourned during pleasure for an address by the Premier of Quebec.



## HON. PHILIPPE COUILLARD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Premier, as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Legislature today on behalf of all of the members of provincial Parliament. It was impressed upon me that diplomacy at events such as this works best when mention of certain hockey rivalries is kept out of the equation. Out of respect for the playoffs, I won't say anything more about this particular topic.

In this Legislature, we are reminded of the date of Confederation, 1867, that is carved in the wood above me. As two of the founding provinces of Canada, we have experienced the challenges of this union, where our country has grown and matured, yet through it all we have learned the value of our diverse cultures and that our paths together are much stronger than we are apart.

Premier, in the history of the Legislative Assembly, only a handful of dignitaries have addressed our House at pleasure, and you are about to do that. Out of this small number, it is worth noting that today is the third time that the leader of the province of Quebec has spoken here, as did Premier Antonio Barrette in 1960 and Premier Jean Lesage in 1967. I think these historical occasions speak volumes about the type of relationship our two provinces do have.

Monsieur le Premier Ministre, bienvenue. La parole est à vous. Mr. Premier, welcome. The floor is yours.

0920

**L'hon. Philippe Couillard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, monsieur le Président de l'Assemblée législative; madame la Première Ministre; mesdames et messieurs les Ministres; monsieur le Chef de l'opposition officielle et également monsieur le Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur, monsieur Brown; madame la Chef du deuxième groupe d'opposition; le très honorable John Turner, ancien premier ministre du Canada; l'honorable Bob Rae, ancien premier ministre de l'Ontario; mesdames et messieurs les députés; mesdames, messieurs.

Je veux tout d'abord vous remercier, madame la Première Ministre, ainsi que les membres de cette Assemblée, pour cette opportunité qui m'est donnée de m'adresser à vous aujourd'hui.

I do so fully aware of the exceptional nature of this event. Indeed, the only times a Quebec Premier has addressed this assembly goes back to the 1960s, when Antonio Barrette first spoke here in April 1960, followed by Jean Lesage in February 1964.

I'm here to attest to the long tradition that unites our two provinces, a relationship based on respect for our differences, but also on our shared desire to advance the interests of the people we represent, at every level.

La relation entre le Québec et l'Ontario remonte aux origines mêmes de la présence européenne en Amérique du Nord. Après les Premières Nations, nous sommes toutes et tous venus d'ailleurs. Mon ancêtre, Guillaume Couillard, est arrivé de Bretagne en 1613, a exploité la première ferme de Nouvelle-France et a fondé à Québec une longue lignée de 12 générations.

There are millions of stories like mine. Think of your own. The only differences between you and I are the dates of our respective families' arrivals in this land, our mother tongues and our regions of origin.

Dans ce contexte, il n'est pas étonnant que nous partagions quatre siècles d'histoire commune, depuis la fondation de la ville de Québec en 1608 et les voyages de Champlain en Ontario en 1615. Cette année marque d'ailleurs le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la présence francophone en Ontario.

Champlain ne s'est pas arrêté à Tadoussac ou à Québec. Il a continué sa route et le français a fait du chemin au fil de notre fleuve, de nos lacs et de nos rivières. Puis, au cours du temps, cette Nouvelle-France est devenue une terre d'accueil pour de nouveaux arrivants de toutes origines. Les frontières du nord de l'Amérique se sont progressivement tracées. Les interrelations entre les membres de diverses communautés se sont multipliées. Des identités se sont affirmées.

Si Champlain revenait en cette terre d'Amérique qu'il a parcourue, dessinée et souvent nommée, il y retrouverait son empreinte : le respect de la diversité et une volonté d'y voir rayonner la langue française.

Depuis 1980, partout au Canada on assiste à la multiplication des classes et des écoles d'immersion française, ce qui témoigne d'une présence accrue de francophiles et de leur désir de transmettre à leurs enfants une part de notre héritage francophone. En 1976, il y avait 260 écoles offrant à 23 000 élèves des programmes d'immersion en français à l'extérieur du Québec; en 2011, 342 000 élèves étaient inscrits aux programmes d'immersion en français à l'extérieur du Québec. C'est une croissance, bien sûr, très importante.

Cela dit, les progrès ne sont pas semblables dans toutes les régions, et les gouvernements peuvent encore faire plus et mieux. C'est d'évidence; les recours judiciaires en matière d'éducation le démontrent.

Nous devons insister sur les avantages du français pour chacune des régions du Canada. Le rayonnement de la langue française partout au Canada est un élément essentiel à la prospérité économique, sociale, culturelle et politique du pays. C'est un élément qui nous distingue toutes et tous, et qui constitue, bien sûr, le cœur du caractère spécifique du Québec.

D'ailleurs, toutes les provinces et tous les territoires le reconnaissent puisqu'ils se sont tous dotés d'une politique d'offre active de services en français. De plus en plus, la légitimité du français s'affirme et c'est un avantage pour le Canada.

Le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la présence française en Ontario en 2015 et le 150<sup>e</sup> de la fédération en 2017 sont des occasions de réaffirmer que la francophonie est une caractéristique fondamentale de l'identité canadienne.

Regardons à nouveau les armoiries du Canada. On y retrouve clairement l'image du pacte de 1867 qui a lié les deux peuples fondateurs du Canada. Et aujourd'hui, s'il fallait les redessiner, nous y ajouterions la marque des Premières Nations avec lesquelles nos ancêtres ont tissé leurs premières alliances.

D'ailleurs, dans la décoration de l'hôtel du Parlement, siège de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec, son concepteur, Eugène-Étienne Taché, a pensé aux premiers occupants en sol québécois, auxquels il a réservé une place d'honneur sur la façade. Le sculpteur Louis-Philippe Hébert les a immortalisés dans deux oeuvres de bronze : Le pêcheur à la nigogue, qui représente un Amérindien dont les pieds trempent dans une eau ruisselante, et La halte dans la forêt, qui représente une famille amérindienne.

L'Ontario et le Québec se sont engagés à travailler de concert avec les autres gouvernements du Canada à la promotion, à la protection, à la pérennité et à la vitalité du fait français au Canada. Notre entente, conclue en novembre dernier, en témoigne. Nous le faisons parce que nous connaissons le rôle clé joué par les francophones dans la fondation et la construction du Canada d'aujourd'hui et leur importance pour le Canada de demain.

Comme premier ministre du Québec, j'assume le rôle primordial de chef d'État de la seule société à majorité francophone d'Amérique. Cette caractéristique unique est une fierté mais également une grande responsabilité.

Depuis Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau, qui fut premier ministre du Québec en 1867, c'est le devoir de chaque personne qui lui a succédé de défendre et de promouvoir notre spécificité et notre caractère distinct, et de promouvoir et protéger notre langue au Québec, ailleurs au Canada et ailleurs en Amérique du Nord. Nous sommes le coeur, toujours fier et fort, des racines françaises de l'Amérique. Nous reconnaissons pleinement le rôle important et les droits des Québécoises et Québécois d'expression anglaise qui, avec nous, ont bâti le Québec.

Pour les francophones de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard à la Colombie-Britannique, en passant par l'Ontario et, naturellement, le Québec, le français est plus qu'une langue; c'est aussi l'expression d'une culture qui nous définit ici et partout dans le monde. C'est un atout extraordinaire sur lequel nous devons tous capitaliser, notamment dans la perspective du libre-échange avec l'Europe.

In 1964, standing before this very assembly, Premier Jean Lesage stated the following. I will translate: "Until now, one could say that in Canada, relations between it's governments have been vertical, that is to say, federal to provincial. But I truly believe they will gradually become horizontal, province to province."

This vision has been realized. Nearly 40 years later, Premier Jean Charest raised the concept of creating a unique forum for Canada's 13 provincial and territorial governments: the Council of the Federation, a forum to promote co-operation between our governments; a forum to build alliances on matters of common interest; a forum through which the provinces and territories that make up this country can affirm their leadership, take their rightful place and work together on issues affecting the populations they represent.

Ontario and Quebec share more than a few of those issues. We are natural allies. Together, we currently

account for over 60% of the Canadian population and close to 60% of Canada's GDP.

Central Canada is an economic force. It is a political force, and it is a force to be reckoned with for ensuring national prosperity.

Notre alliance remonte au tout début de notre histoire. Souvenons-nous de Baldwin et LaFontaine : en 1841, la coopération de deux réformistes modérés, Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine et Robert Baldwin, a contribué en bonne partie à la naissance du Canada après qu'ils aient lutté ensemble pour y introduire le gouvernement responsable et représentatif.

Cartier et Macdonald : leur alliance a permis de jeter les bases de notre fédération, mais également de mettre en place des mesures assurant la promotion et la protection du fait français et du caractère du Québec.

Dès 1886, les premiers ministres Honoré Mercier et Oliver Mowat ont mis en place la première conférence interprovinciale à Québec.

Notre relation est devenue particulièrement féconde à partir des années 1960, qui constituent, certes, une période charnière de l'histoire de nos deux États. Le 5 juillet 1960, Jean Lesage devenait premier ministre du Québec, marquant ainsi le début de la Révolution tranquille.

One year later, John Robarts became Premier of Ontario. At the time, Ontario was undergoing radical social change, just like Quebec. In the shadow of these common challenges, our relations grew closer still. At this historic crossroads, our Premiers rebuilt the alliance that is at the very root of the Canadian federation.

**0930**

In 1969, our relations gained a further measure of formalization. That year, recognizing that Canada's historical and linguistic heritage was reflected in two communities, one French and the other English, and convinced that greater co-operation between the provinces was essential to the country's vitality, the governments of Quebec and Ontario signed the agreement for co-operation and exchange in educational and cultural matters. Under this agreement, various co-operative mechanisms touching on language, education, culture and public administration were implemented.

This close co-operation continued, particularly under a succession of Premiers: Ontario's Bill Davis, David Peterson and Bob Rae with Quebec's Robert Bourassa; Dalton McGuinty with Jean Charest.

We have already travelled a long way together, but we can, and we must, go further still.

When I took office in April 2014, I made the decision to pursue an even deeper our historic relationship with Ontario. I soon discovered a shared desire to go further on our shared journey. I want to thank the Premier for her openness and willingness to expand our dialogue in so many ways.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Philippe Couillard:** On November 21, 2014, here in Toronto, our respective cabinets had a joint meeting and launched the basis for this renewed alliance. As a



result, four new co-operation protocols were signed: revitalization of the trade and co-operation agreement between Ontario and Quebec, seasonal electricity supply, concerted action on climate change, and a declaration of the Francophonie.

J'aimerais attirer plus particulièrement votre attention sur la lutte contre les changements climatiques. Lors de Climate Week à New York en septembre 2014, le secrétaire général des Nations Unies, Ban Ki-moon, déclarait : « Il n'y a pas de plan B, parce qu'il n'y a pas de planète B. »

Pour moi et bien d'autres, le progrès économique et l'emploi se conjuguent nécessairement avec le développement durable et leurs deux compagnons essentiels, la protection de l'environnement et le développement social.

Nous vivons aujourd'hui à une époque qui nous oblige à résister à un faux choix : le développement économique ou la protection de l'environnement. Cette lutte contre les changements climatiques est un défi, mais également et surtout une opportunité de développer une économie du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, une économie créatrice d'emplois qui fait de l'ingéniosité et de la créativité les pierres angulaires d'un nouveau paradigme économique qui dépasse nos frontières.

La lutte contre les changements climatiques est un des plus grands défis auxquels l'humanité est confrontée. Le succès dans cette lutte exige des actions coordonnées, rapides et déterminantes de la part de tous, sans exception. Les États fédérés comme l'Ontario et le Québec ont un rôle incontournable à jouer dans cette lutte et l'efficacité de notre contribution sera décuplée si nous agissons ensemble.

À l'aube de la prochaine Conférence des Parties, qui se déroulera à Paris en décembre prochain, jamais le rôle des États fédérés n'aura été aussi important pour notre avenir et celui de nos enfants. À nous de saisir cette chance, parce que le prix de l'inaction sera encore plus grand. Les changements climatiques causent déjà des phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes comme des inondations ou des sécheresses. Ces situations, nous les vivons tous et toutes dans chaque province ou territoire du Canada et dans chaque État américain.

D'ailleurs, nous avons signé récemment, avec les États du Vermont et de New York, une entente qui prévoit désormais une collaboration transfrontalière accrue sur le plan de la prévention, de la prévision et de l'atténuation des impacts des inondations en provenance du Lac Champlain et du bassin de la rivière Richelieu.

Je sais que chaque parlementaire ici présent comprend la nécessité d'agir, et partage cette préoccupation; nous l'avons constaté lors de notre récent sommet à Québec. Les façons de faire diffèrent à travers le pays, chaque région devant tenir compte de sa réalité économique, géographique et politique.

What I want to emphasize here is that putting a price on carbon is a logical choice. Increasingly adopted here and abroad, it is also a choice that will yield concrete results.

In Quebec, emission units sold through carbon market auctions will generate more than \$3 billion by 2020, 100% of which will be invested through a dedicated green fund in measures to reduce emissions, accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy and better prepare Quebec for the impact of climate change.

Premier Wynne's intent to join the cap-and-trade system under the Western Climate Initiative is indeed excellent news. Together with California, our association will create the largest carbon market in North America. We will continue to build relationships with other partners, and we have good reasons to hope that others will follow suit.

Trade and the economy are also areas where co-operation between our two provinces generates promising leads. Our combined GDP is over \$1 trillion, and the Quebec-Ontario economic zone is the fourth largest in North America after California, Texas and New York.

Trade with Ontario amounts to more than 60% of Quebec's interprovincial trade, while trade with Quebec represents close to 40% of Ontario's. Trade in goods and services between us amounted to over \$83 billion in 2011.

Aujourd'hui, nos défis sont semblables : la nécessité de retrouver l'équilibre budgétaire et de diminuer le fardeau de la dette publique, tout en créant un environnement d'affaires favorable à l'investissement, à la croissance de l'économie et à la création d'emplois. Par ailleurs, nous annoncerons sous peu, comme nous nous y étions engagés, la conclusion d'un accord ambitieux sur les marchés publics à la mesure de ce que nous faisons avec d'autres pays du monde. Faisant suite à notre Accord sur le commerce intérieur de 2009, il s'agit d'un progrès majeur accompli au bénéfice des travailleurs et des entreprises, une nouvelle énergie donnée à notre marche commune vers une plus grande prospérité.

Notre politique économique vise à renforcer le Québec. Quand l'économie du Québec est plus forte, c'est tout le Canada qui en profite.

When Ontario's economy is strong, all of Canada benefits. And when Quebec and Ontario work together to forge a strong economy, when they display imagination and dare to go even further, then everything becomes possible.

Il en va de même de la place du Québec dans le Canada. Au fil des années, des ententes politiques et des décisions de la Cour suprême, les contours du caractère spécifique du Québec se sont précisés : la seule société et le seul État majoritairement francophone d'Amérique, sa culture unique partout reconnue, un régime juridique marqué par sa tradition civiliste et, dans les mots mêmes de la Cour suprême dans un jugement récent, « ses valeurs sociales distinctes ». Cette réalité évidente, confirmée par la Cour, appelle un acte de reconnaissance à la fois fort et enthousiaste, un acte de reconnaissance envers un partenaire qui souhaite une alliance encore plus solide.

Nous avons une histoire commune et nous partageons les mêmes aspirations pour nos enfants. Nos différences

ne nous éloignent pas : elles nous avantagent et elles nous distinguent.

Everything becomes possible when individual specificities are respected. Durant les années 1960, le premier ministre Jean Lesage affirmait que l'un « des objectifs du régime confédératif ... est de rendre possible aux groupes ... le maintien et surtout le développement de leurs caractéristiques propres. »

Soon afterward, John Robarts added, “Canada is a federal state, not a unitary state. This is a fact that cannot be overstated and should be reiterated constantly, given its profound implications. The provinces were created, and exist, in recognition of regional differences.”

I recognize the Canada of today in the words of these two Premiers, a Canada that progresses when its constituent states affirm their leadership.

Il est clair dans notre esprit que le Québec, comme tous les États membres de notre fédération, est libre de faire ses choix selon ses priorités. Mais ce que nous rappellent les premiers ministres Lesage et Robarts, c'est que le gouvernement fédéral a non seulement la responsabilité mais également l'obligation de tenir compte de nos caractéristiques communes et spécifiques dans l'élaboration de ses politiques.

Comme vous le savez, une campagne électorale fédérale aura lieu au cours des prochains mois. Les États qui forment ce pays ont tous des particularités dont les partis fédéraux doivent tenir compte, et le Québec ne fait pas exception, tout comme l'Ontario. Comme premier ministre du Québec et au nom de la population québécoise, je considère essentiel que les partis fédéraux nous disent clairement quels sont leurs plans pour le Québec. Nous sommes plus de 8 200 000 Québécois, la deuxième province la plus peuplée au pays, une société distincte qui a quitté les estrades pour reprendre sa place—toute sa place—celle de leader au sein de la fédération canadienne qu'elle a contribué à bâtir. Avant de leur accorder leur confiance, les Québécoises et les Québécois sont en droit de savoir quelle sera la position de chaque parti fédéral sur plusieurs enjeux, dont plusieurs ont fait l'objet de discussions et de consensus au sein du Conseil de la fédération.

0940

Le Transfert canadien en matière de santé : nous voulons que la pondération prenne en considération la démographie au-delà d'un simple financement per capita.

Le financement des infrastructures publiques : 90 milliards de dollars en 10 ans pour le Québec seulement, et 130 milliards de dollars pour l'Ontario. Le palier fédéral doit en faire plus de façon à ce que l'ensemble des ordres de gouvernement atteigne progressivement le seuil de 5 % du PIB recommandé par l'OCDE, la péréquation dont le plafond doit être éliminé ou redéfini.

La lutte contre les changements climatiques à la suite de notre Sommet de Québec : quels sont les plans des partis fédéraux pour soutenir les efforts des provinces et territoires? Comment les cibles qui seront présentées à Paris intégreront-elles ces efforts? Quelle sera la répartition de ceux-ci à travers la fédération?

Et nous rappellerons aussi que le caractère spécifique du Québec doit nécessairement être formellement reconnu, parce que cette reconnaissance, redisons-le, c'est le reflet d'une réalité évidente qui participe à la définition même du pays.

Voilà certaines des priorités que nous soulèverons en vue des élections fédérales à venir. On demandera aux chefs des partis de s'exprimer clairement sur chacun de ces enjeux. Par la suite, bien sûr, ce sera à la population de faire son choix.

Ensemble, nous devons préparer l'avenir en poursuivant sur notre lancée. C'est ce que nous visons et c'est ce qui nous unit. Le monde autour de nous change, apportant son lot de défis. On doit donc tous travailler ensemble à l'établissement d'un fédéralisme dans lequel la coopération est une valeur partagée et réelle.

We must reaffirm, as did Robarts and Lesage in the 1960s, that rather than a unitary state, our country is a federation where differences are respected. This is at the very core of our collective success to date. This will be the backbone of our future and one of the building blocks of the prosperity we all want to leave for our children.

This is not to deny the difficulties and disagreements that we sometimes have and will have. But we must rise above short-term visions because of our shared responsibility to our fellow citizens of today and tomorrow: that of giving them a more equitable world where respect and recognition of the other are the drivers of action. A free, prosperous and just society: This is what we all stand for. This is what our predecessors fought for. This must be our legacy to our children.

Since 1867, Quebec and Ontario have contributed positively to the functioning of the federation and the growth of a shared economy.

Il importe que nous nous assurions du respect de nos champs de compétence et que nous remettons de l'avant l'influence combinée du Québec et de l'Ontario au sein de la fédération.

We will continue to hold constructive dialogues on the many challenges we share and the many ways forward yet to be discovered. The government I lead firmly believes that Quebec progresses when it seeks to unite rather than divide, when it participates rather than excluding itself, and above all, when it builds bridges with its partners in the federation rather than putting up walls.

La fédération canadienne est porteuse de principes de vie commune qui nous amènent vers de plus vastes horizons, un espace unique, envié partout sur la planète, de partage démocratique, économique, culturel et social.

Le Québec doit et veut rester un leader de cette fédération, un repère et un ami pour les francophones d'Amérique. Ensemble, nous voulons promouvoir les intérêts du Québec et de l'Ontario, mais nous voulons faire plus que ça. Nous souhaitons faire progresser le Canada d'une manière qui profite à tous les partenaires de la fédération, tout en réaffirmant le pacte et les alliances qui l'ont fait naître—particulièrement notre alliance, celle que nous vous convions à enrichir encore davantage au profit des concitoyens que nous



représentons. C'est une invitation à laquelle tous et toutes sont conviés. Je vous remercie.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Monsieur le Premier Ministre, merci beaucoup.

On behalf of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, I thank you for your address to us today. Better understanding is forged through opportunities such as these when our doors are open and our ideas are shared. That is the spirit in which we have now embraced your visit here today. Again, merci beaucoup.

At this time, by motion, I am told that the address from the three leaders will take place. We will now invite the Premier to respond.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Premier Couillard, thank you so very much. Mr. Prime Minister, my colleagues in the House, leader of the official opposition and leader of the third party and all of our guests, thank you very much.

Bonjour. Boozhoo. Aanii. It's wonderful to be here with all of you. On behalf of the government of Ontario, I am happy to welcome Premier Couillard to Queen's Park and to thank him for this special address.

Au nom du gouvernement de l'Ontario, je suis heureuse de souhaiter la bienvenue à Queen's Park au premier ministre Couillard. Je le remercie d'avoir accepté de prononcer cette allocution spéciale. Merci beaucoup.

It is a true honour to have you here today, and I want to thank all members of the Legislature, in particular the leader of the official opposition and the leader of the third party, for supporting this historic opportunity.

The agreement of the whole House demonstrates that this is a moment that transcends party lines, a moment that joins us to the history of this chamber, in which to date only nine such special addresses have been made before the Ontario Legislature.

Aujourd'hui, le premier ministre Couillard vient de prononcer la 10<sup>e</sup> allocution spéciale dans l'histoire de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Only twice, as has been said, have these addresses been made by Canadian Premiers, and on both occasions they were Premiers of our neighbour, our friend and our partner, the province of Quebec.

Aujourd'hui, le premier ministre Couillard donne suite à cette tradition de même qu'à cette autre longue tradition de collaboration entre nos deux provinces.

The relationship between Ontario and Quebec stretches back well over a century to the union of Upper and Lower Canada and the joint role we played as founding partners of Confederation.

Tout au long de notre riche histoire, une longue lignée de représentants du gouvernement, du monde des affaires et de la société civile ont mis sur pied des alliances extraordinaires et, avec chacune, créé des liens qui nous rapprochent et qui nous rendent plus forts: from Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine and Robert Baldwin, who reached out across cultural and regional divisions to establish responsible government in Canada; to John A. Macdonald and George-Étienne Cartier, qui ont dépassé

leurs différences pour travailler à mettre en place une vision commune d'un pays unifié; to Jean Lesage and John Robarts, whose collaboration with their contemporaries helped build our modern country by creating a social union within Canada; to Dalton McGuinty and Jean Charest, whose first joint meeting of our cabinets in 2008 built on the progress of those who went before to create the foundation for the relationship that we enjoy today.

Nous sommes honorés de poursuivre cette tradition de partenariat avec le premier ministre Couillard, un leader qui, à chaque occasion, a démontré comment notre patrimoine commun est une source de privilège et de prospérité, un premier ministre qui travaille à créer de nouveaux avantages, de nouvelles possibilités et de nouveaux partenariats qui nous permettent de continuer le travail historique de nos prédécesseurs en améliorant la vie des Canadiens et des Canadiennes d'aujourd'hui et de demain.

Together, Ontario and Quebec are working to build a stronger central Canada and thereby a stronger Canada. Through collaboration, we are fully confronting the challenges ahead and unabashedly seizing those opportunities that will strengthen our economies now and in the future.

Notre partenariat a déjà généré d'importants résultats pour la population que nous desservons.

In November, we signed an unprecedented agreement to expand our electricity trade, keeping power more affordable, reliable and sustainable.

Nous avons mis sur pied un groupe de travail qui examine d'autres moyens de faire équipe sur des questions énergétiques communes.

**0950**

We're reinvigorating our trade agreement to help businesses remain competitive and to grow.

Nous revalorisons notre entente sur le commerce afin d'aider les entreprises à demeurer concurrentielles et à continuer de croître.

Pour reconnaître que la francophonie est un élément intégral dans le succès du Canada, nous avons signé une déclaration visant à protéger et à promouvoir la culture et le patrimoine francophone en Ontario. L'Ontario est le lieu de résidence de près de 612 000 francophones et représente la plus importante population de francophones à l'extérieur du Québec.

Last month, when we announced that we would implement a cap-and-trade system here in Ontario, we also announced, as Premier Couillard has said, our intent to link that system with Quebec and California under the Western Climate Initiative.

Our provinces have been leaders on this critical issue for some time now. And as the challenge grows more urgent and the opportunities arising from action more abundant, it's imperative that we continue to join forces. By combining our efforts to fight climate change, we are building a stronger and greener economy, and adding strength to Canada's founding partnership, so that its benefits can endure for years to come.

C'est en unissant nos efforts pour lutter contre le changement climatique que nous bâtirons une économie plus forte et plus verte, et que nous renforcerons le partenariat fondateur du Canada de telle sorte que les fruits de notre travail commun pourront être ressentis pour encore bien des années.

When the colonial powers of our past finally ceased their struggle for control of these territories, the future relationship of the English and French was anything but certain. But as a nation and a province we have flourished, because ours is a rich heritage that starts with aboriginal people, the French and the English finding a way to live together, not always peacefully but ultimately and mostly with goodwill and mutual respect and admiration. As George-Étienne Cartier said in 1865, "They were placed like great families beside each other, and their contact produced a healthy spirit of emulation."

With Premier Couillard's visit, we will continue to build on well over 100 years of healthy emulation, and move forward with a new sense of shared purpose.

This year, our provinces are celebrating our deep cultural and historic ties, as we mark 400 years of French presence in Ontario and acknowledge the rich contributions that the preservation of francophone culture and language makes to Ontario. This coming fall, we look forward to making progress at the next joint meeting of cabinet ministers in Quebec. Merci.

Le premier ministre Couillard et moi nous sommes engagés à tenir ces réunions de nos Conseils des ministres sur une base régulière. Nous nous sommes engagés à poursuivre notre collaboration alors que nous travaillons ensemble à bâtir des économies durables pour l'avenir.

We want to ensure that our two provinces move forward as the largest, most dynamic, resilient and diversified economic region in Canada—as the country's economic powerhouse.

I want to thank Premier Couillard for his leadership and his partnership.

Je veux remercier le premier ministre Couillard de son leadership et de son partenariat.

We've achieved much in very little time. By working together at the Council of the Federation on our China trade mission and through our joint meeting of cabinet ministers, we have developed a friendship, for which I am grateful. I know that we can do so much more to build each other up, to grow our economies and to create more opportunities and more security in the lives of the people whom we are so honoured to represent.

Merci, meegwetch, thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** At this time I would like to request that the leader of Progressive Conservative Party now make presentation in response to the speech.

*Applause.*

**M. Patrick Brown:** Je vous remercie pour cet accueil. C'est un plaisir d'être ici aujourd'hui. Il faut que je remercie tous les membres pour avoir offert leur consentement de me donner l'opportunité de vous parler dans cette merveilleuse Chambre.

C'est un vrai privilège pour moi, au nom de mes collègues du caucus, de souhaiter la bienvenue au premier ministre Couillard et de répondre à son discours en ce qui est mon premier discours comme chef du Parti PC de l'Ontario.

It is a real privilege for me, on behalf of my caucus colleagues, to welcome Premier Couillard and to respond to his speech in what is really my first official speech as leader of the PC Party of Ontario.

La relation historique entre l'Ontario et le Québec est une qui est spéciale depuis presque 150 années.

I am proud that it is one of my predecessors as leader of the party, John Robarts, who did so much to build a strong relationship between our two provinces, working alongside a predecessor of your party, Jean Lesage. The Confederation of Tomorrow conference, which Premier Robarts conceived and finally held in 1967, was a seminal moment in the history of this relationship and, indeed, the history of our country. Premier Robarts believed that the relationship between Ontario and Quebec was important both to the two provinces and to the country as a whole. While the results of that conference proved to be a significant step forward for national unity in Canada, the organization of the conference itself was equally important to forging a bond and a sense of mutual respect between the two provinces at the time; indeed, a bond between our two provinces that has continued over decades. We are reminded of this by your presence here today, Premier Couillard.

Cette relation a une importance particulière pour moi parce que, en fait, j'ai commencé mon implication en politique grâce à un politicien québécois, l'ancien premier ministre du Québec Jean Charest. Jean Charest était le chef du Parti PC du Canada. J'étais en train de visiter ma tante qui vivait au Québec dans une petite ville qui s'appelle North Hatley, à côté de Sherbrooke, et, par coïncidence, au fond de la rue de Jean Charest.

J'ai fini par le rencontrer et j'ai été si impressionné par lui et sa vision pour le Canada que je me suis impliqué en politique immédiatement. Mais comme j'habite en Ontario, j'ai ressenti que j'avais un certain rattachement à la province du Québec, un sentiment qui a été intensifié par une expérience que j'ai eue un peu de temps après, pendant le référendum du Québec en 1995. Comme nous le savions tous, Jean Charest était une personnalité de premier plan pour garder la province du Québec comme partie du Canada. J'ai décidé de m'impliquer et de participer à cette cause.

I spent a great deal of time travelling around Quebec following Mr. Jean Charest, and I saw the special relationship supporting Jean Charest as he spoke passionately about what it meant to be a Canadian and what it meant for Quebec to be part of Canada. I'll never forget those rallies where he held the Canadian passport up and said how proud he was to be a Canadian and to be a Quebecer. It was that experience that left an indelible mark on me and helped shape who I am.

Ontario and Quebec have been important partners in the history of our country, dating all the way back to the



partnership of Baldwin and LaFontaine to bring responsible government to our land. While we haven't always been on the same page on every issue, there is certainly more to unite us than divide us. Part of what has united us over the years has been our provinces' abilities to show leadership on key issues.

During your time in office, Premier Couillard, you have shown leadership in many areas of importance, but there are two that I'd like to mention specifically today. First is the general economic health of Quebec; and second, which is actually part of the first, is energy rates.

Since you came to office, you have made the attainment of a balanced budget a priority. You are taking steps to ensure the long-term financial health of your province and are committed to keeping your budget balanced.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** As you can tell, this is music to my ears and certainly to the ears of my colleagues.

You realize that to be able to have a prosperous province, you need to have a strong economy. This thing gives you the ability to invest in projects and people.

A key policy that is tied to building a strong economy is the second area in which Quebec has and is showing leadership: your province's energy policy. Your energy policy is a model for affordable energy in a province. Quebec, similar to Ontario, is blessed with a natural abundance of hydroelectric power. You have embraced this power and are using it to ensure hydro rates for the people of the province remain low. This is a model of leadership in this policy area.

**1000**

Low hydro rates mean a better business climate. Companies see these rates as a cost of doing business rather than a barrier to doing business. Low hydro rates mean better circumstances for people. Families and individuals who don't have to carry the burden of ever-increasing rates are better able to manage their household budgets, and businesses that want to set up operations in the province don't have to worry that hydro costs, either for their operations or their employees, will be a huge burden.

Recently, you have benefited from Xstrata Copper deciding to move its business to Quebec, in large part because of the reasonable hydro rates you offer. This is the type of example that I'd like to see here in Ontario: businesses moving here because of our hydro rates, rather than moving away. Another benefit of sound energy policy is that it provides the flexibility and breathing room to investigate other alternatives. For example, you are able to adopt a cap-and-trade policy because you have reasonable hydro rates. It is my hope and plan, as leader of the Ontario PC Party, to look further at how you have managed your energy issues in Quebec, and to see how we can make changes to our policies to position ourselves similarly.

Premier, you know how to do it: You focus on cheap power, and you are able to attract jobs to your province. I applaud this initiative. However, I hope that one day

Ontario will be rivalling you for those jobs, much like we have been rivals in hockey in past years—okay, maybe not past years; maybe past decades, which is painful for Toronto Maple Leafs fans. But I should say that I have been a bit preoccupied, the last few weeks, and on that note I should say that tomorrow night I certainly will be cheering for your Montreal Canadiens.

I'd like to conclude my remarks by returning to John Robarts and his feeling for, and relationship with, Quebec. One of his advisers said of Premier Robarts that he wanted a partnership with Quebec in fact and spirit and purpose. I don't think there are more appropriate words.

Premier Ministre Couillard, bienvenue à Queen's Park aujourd'hui, et j'espère bien de travailler avec vous dans l'avenir. Merci.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** At this time, I would invite the leader of the third party to provide a response.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Premier, distinguished guests, colleagues and members of the assembly, it is my pleasure to rise, on behalf of Ontario's New Democratic caucus, to respond to Premier Couillard's remarks.

Monsieur le Premier Ministre, au nom du groupe parlementaire néo-démocrate, nous vous remercions de vos remarques.

The adjournment of the House to permit an address by a distinguished visitor is not a common occurrence. In fact, this has happened only nine prior times in the history of the Legislature, and this marks only the third time that the Ontario Legislature has been addressed by the Premier of another Canadian province. On behalf of Ontario's New Democrats, welcome and bienvenue on this historic occasion.

While Ontario may not be formally known as "La belle province," I am sure you will find that our province is an incredibly beautiful province in its own right. In fact, Ontario is "Yours to Discover," and I hope that you have a chance to see some of the wonders that our beautiful province has to offer during your visit.

Ontario and Quebec have a long history of co-operation since we were Upper and Lower Canada, long before the days of Confederation. I'm pleased to see the continued spirit of co-operation between our two provinces more than 200 years later.

Ontario is proud to boast a francophone community of more than 600,000 people that dates back 400 years.

In addition to being the two most populous provinces and the two largest provinces by geographical size, today we are each other's largest trading partners within Canada. Our provinces amount to nearly 70% of Canada's manufacturing sales and, combined, we account for more than half of the country's gross domestic product.

Ontarians and Quebecers share a strong commitment and belief in the public sector and the positive role government can play in people's lives. Affordable child care, public health care and public hydro are just a few examples. There are many opportunities to learn from each other's experiences. In fact, we can look to Quebec on many matters to see how programs are being imple-

mented and how its experience can assist in Ontario providing better services to our people.

Dans bien des domaines, bien des occasions nous sont offertes pour partager nos expériences avec nos voisins et apprendre les uns des autres.

Quebecers receive excellent public health care, and we can learn from each other how to continue to provide the best possible care across very spacious provinces.

Quebec is also a model for the whole country on the provision of affordable child care. Dans le domaine des services de garderie abordable, le Québec est un exemple à suivre.

Ontario's New Democrats believe that all Ontarians should have accessible, affordable child care. Affordable child care helps parents get back to work. It helps pull families out of poverty and gives our children a chance to learn and grow in a safe and enriching environment.

New Democrats believe that the Ontario government should be looking to Quebec as an example with regard to the reduction and distribution of electricity as well. On this point, I know we respectfully disagree with Ontario's government of the day. Quebec provides reliable, inexpensive and, importantly, public power. Le Québec fournit à sa population des services d'électricité fiables, peu coûteux et publics.

The people of Quebec, with their public system, pay electricity bills that are less than half of those of Ontarians. That's more money in the pockets of Quebecers, it is a lower overhead cost for Quebec businesses and it is a competitive advantage for Quebec's industries. Between taxes, the hydro dividend and investment, Quebec receives a substantial yearly return from their public hydro system.

The Ontario NDP caucus believes in public power, but we also believe that the most affordable and greatest power is the power that we don't use. Quebec has made a number of significant investments in conservation that we in Ontario would do well to explore.

The hydro systems of our two provinces are not completely analogous, but I believe there is an important lesson here. Public power is good for a province's economy and is good for its people.

I was glad to hear Premier Couillard's perspective on Quebec's cap-and-trade program. As was mentioned, in 2008, Ontario and Quebec signed a deal to launch a cap-and-trade system. The Ontario NDP caucus supported enabling legislation for an Ontario cap-and-trade system, which was set to be implemented by January 2012. We were pleased to see that Quebec and California were able to meet the 2012 deadline and that progress is being made to bring Ontario along.

Quebec and California were successfully able to integrate their systems, which will provide a more robust market and, ultimately, lower cost to businesses. The Ontario NDP eagerly awaits details about the government's plan. Nous attendons avec impatience des détails sur le plan de plafonnement et d'échange de droits d'émission du gouvernement.

Speaker, it's been an honour to have the Premier of Quebec address the Ontario Legislature. We are proud of the strong relationship between our two provinces, and we hope to see that partnership continue to grow and flourish.

As a caucus and a party, we are proud to share the Quebec government's commitment to federalism. Along with Canada's NDP, who hold nearly three quarters of Quebec seats, we believe that this commitment to federalism is good for Quebec, good for Ontario and good for all of Canada.

Le NPD de l'Ontario vous sait gré de nous avoir fait part de vos idées. The Ontario NDP caucus thanks Premier Couillard for his insights and perspectives.

Au nom du groupe parlementaire NPD de l'Ontario, nous vous remercions chaleureusement de votre présence. On behalf of the Ontario NDP, we thank you for being here and are honoured with your presence.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** At this time, by motion, we will be recessed until 10:30 for question period. I invite all of our guests to stay for question period.

Once again, on behalf of the entire Legislature, merci beaucoup, monsieur le Premier Ministre. Thank you very much.

*The House recessed from 1010 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd like to introduce, from Community Living Stratford and Area, Trevor McGregor, Tom McDermott, Alex O'Reilly, Monica O'Connell and Sue Dickson, and from Community Living North Perth, Mike Town.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I would like to introduce a friend of mine up in the Speaker's gallery: Marc Kealey. He's with a gentleman who I know you're going to introduce later.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I'd like to introduce to the House, in the members' east gallery—originally from Thunder Bay, but doing her schooling down here in Toronto now and working with me as an intern—Jenny Commisso. Jenny, welcome.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'd like to introduce Amanda Whalen, who is in the press gallery this morning. She is the Queen's Park press gallery summer intern, and she just finished her master of arts in journalism at Western University. Amanda will be with us until the end of August. Welcome, Amanda.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm so pleased to be able to welcome a family member here today. My cousin Daniel White is sitting up there, and I'd like to invite him to come down here and sit in the members' gallery.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** It's a bit of a family day here in the Legislature. Ian Shaw, my senior adviser for strategic initiatives, is here with his mother, Manjit Shaw. Welcome, Ms. Shaw. Good to see you.



And my legislative assistant, the hard-working Alexandra Oakes, is here with her father, Robert Oakes. Welcome, Robert. Good to see you.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like the members of the Legislature to welcome Adam Thompson, Jeremy Huntley, Barbara Squirrell, Mary Ann Lancaster, Colleen Curran, Michelle Busby and Michelle Hartley from Community Living Dufferin in the great riding of Dufferin-Caledon.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to welcome the grade 10 students from Marc Garneau to the Legislature this morning. Welcome. Great to have you here.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** This morning I want to welcome Tina Arvanitis from the Ontario Energy Association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I understand that Mary Cruden, the president of Canadian Parents for French, Ontario branch, is here today. What a great day to be here, when Premier Couillard was here.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** On behalf of the member for Mississauga-Brampton South and on behalf of page Thomas Atkinson, it's my pleasure to welcome Thomas's mother, Cindy Atkinson, and his godmother, Denise Edwards. They'll be in the public gallery this morning. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I mentioned it this morning; I think it bears repeating: The former Prime Minister of Canada, John Turner, is in the room. Welcome.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Today, 817,000 more students are now impacted by the chaos this government has created in our province's education system. With no EQAO testing, parents and students will lose out on this important assessment that lets them know how they're progressing in class. The absence of report card comments will likewise keep parents in the dark, and that's just the beginning of this strike action.

The education minister said parents shouldn't be put through this uncertainty, but I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that it is this government that has created this uncertainty through their flawed negotiation process.

Premier, the education minister can't get the job done, and she won't step aside. Will you fire your Minister of Education, end this chaos for Ontario parents and make sure that children get the full education they deserve?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you. I appreciate it. I may have to re-enact my original Thursday issue. When I stand, it stops. No shots.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I know that the Minister of Education is going to want to comment, but let me just say that we want very much for the teachers, the support staff, the students all to be in class across the province, no matter what board, no matter what region of the province. Obviously I'm encouraged, in terms of the elementary students in the public system, that they'll remain in the classroom. I'm pleased to see that ETFO has returned to the central table, because the only way to get a deal is to be negotiating.

We do believe in the collective bargaining process, and that is a real difference between us and the party opposite. We believe that the collective bargaining process should be allowed to work. There is a new process in place that recognizes that there is a central process and a local. That was necessary in order for us to move forward, and we look very much forward to getting those deals at the table.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Well, Premier, not only are the 817,000 elementary school students impacted; there are still nearly 72,000 students locked out of their classrooms. This government needs to think about those students for just a minute.

Think about the Brock High School rugby team in Cannington, who have practised so hard all year and now may not be able to compete at OFSAA. Think about the grade 12 student from Sudbury who has been practising all year for a senior solo at a farewell concert that may never happen. Think about the student at Sinclair Secondary School in Whitby. She needs to be in her calculus class as she tries to prepare for an Ivy League education.

Premier, make these students your top priority. Fire that education minister so these students can get back to school.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I do think about those students. That's exactly what I think about when I think about how important it is that we have a world-class education system in this province. That is exactly why it's very important that we have a process in place that allows us to work with our teacher and support staff partners, that we get a deal at the table, that we honour the collective bargaining process. That's very important to the relationship between all of the adults involved in the education system.

I'm not happy with the fact that there are kids out of school. I'm not happy at all about that. In fact, I got involved in politics mostly because of the 26 million student days that were lost because of the previous government's inability to have a partnership with the education sector at all.

We are absolutely committed to making sure that the collective bargaining process works, partaking of that and continuing to build up the best education system in the world.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Again to the Premier: Students are being used as pawns in a process that this government has created. It's now obvious that no one seems to even know what the rules are. When both the education minister and the leaders of teachers' unions make conflicting comments about what's an issue at the central bargaining table and what's an issue at the local table, is it any wonder that a settlement is nowhere in sight?

Premier, for 16 days, Durham students have been without an education. For 11 days, students in the Rainbow district have been without an education. For six days, Peel students have likewise been denied an education by your government. Now, with over 800,000 elementary students impacted by your two-tier train wreck of a bargaining system, it's clear the education minister is not up to the job.

Once again, I ask you to do the right thing: Fire that education minister, get negotiations going and get the kids back in the classroom.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You can ignore me all you want, at your peril.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

1040

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Obviously we share the concern of everyone in this chamber, from all three parties, that there are students are out of school, and we want to support those students. But what I would point out is that we are committed to the collective bargaining process. Durham, where it is a local strike, there are local talks continuing. ETFO, the elementary teachers, have returned to the table and discussions are continuing. That's how we're going to solve the problem, by negotiations—and negotiations are going on.

But we are very concerned about those students, particularly those secondary students who are out of class. In fact, on Friday—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Nepean–Carleton and the deputy House leader.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —I met with Colleges Ontario, I've met with the Council of Ontario Universities and we've met with the boards repeatedly. We're working to make sure the Internet courses are there to support—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** To the Premier: Our guest this morning, Premier Couillard, has taken real steps to balance Quebec's budget. Premier Wynne's budget balancing plan involves a fire sale of assets that belong to the people of Ontario. Furthermore, Premier Couillard has shown leadership with his province's energy policy. He understands that low hydro rates are fundamental to create a climate where business can prosper and families can thrive. You, on the other hand, are intent on bankrupting Ontario's businesses with your government's energy policies, forcing them to flee this province and set up shop elsewhere just to keep operating.

Premier, will you take a lesson from Quebec about the direct relationship between low hydro rates and keeping businesses here in Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

All right, so we'll apply it: Next one when I'm standing and I get quiet and someone wants to interject, they're named.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I neglected, at the beginning of my first answer, to congratulate Patrick Brown on his leadership win this weekend. Having been through leadership myself, I know that he must be very excited and anxious as he goes into these coming weeks. So I just wanted to congratulate him.

The member opposite reminded me—because of course the new leader touched on this issue in his remarks. When we talk about the relationship with Quebec, and we compare and contrast our realities, I know that the member opposite understands that we have different geography than Quebec. I know he understands that. I know he understands that the tilt of the land is different in Ontario than it is in Quebec. But we certainly will work with Quebec to do everything we can to make sure that we maximize our partnership.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Ontario's Xstrata Copper moved its operations to Quebec in large part because of the competitive hydro rates in that province. This past month, Goodyear chose to open a plant in Mexico instead of Ontario because of our ridiculously expensive hydro rates. Ontario needs businesses to come here because of our hydro rates, not to run away because they can't afford them. Your government's failed energy policies have already cost this province over 300,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs.

Premier, how much longer will you ignore the exodus out of Ontario of solid job creators like Goodyear before you take real action to lower Ontario's hydro rates?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the member will know that in northern Ontario we have the NIER Pro-



gram, which is an industrial support program that takes 25% off the price of manufacturing facilities in northern Ontario. In northern Ontario, we have among the lowest rates—industrial rates—in North America.

The new leader of the Progressive Conservatives talked about basing our energy policy forward in building new hydroelectricity capacity in the province of Ontario. We've used that all up; there's no more capacity. We spent \$2.6 billion expanding the —

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton, second time. The member from Lanark.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We spent \$2.6 billion expanding the Lower Mattagami hydro dam. We spent \$1.2 billion building a new tunnel to expand Niagara's capacity—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the Premier: Quebec has embraced the fact that a prosperous province needs to have a strong private sector economy, an economy that allows governments to invest in its people rather than sell off public assets to buy labour peace.

Quebec wisely chose to build its energy system around its strength: a natural abundance of hydroelectric power. You, on the other hand, insist on subsidizing expensive wind and solar projects that are costing Ontario families and businesses thousands of dollars each year.

Today the Premier touted Quebec's accomplishments.

Premier, will you follow Quebec's lead and adopt a realistic, affordable, provincial energy plan?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Last month, Ontario's manufacturing sector gained 1,200 new jobs. We saw the manufacturing sector gain over 800 jobs the month before. Since 2003, our government has announced over \$1.6 billion in support of Ontario manufacturers, leveraging over \$15 billion from the private sector to spur innovation.

We are also among the lowest in North America in terms of industrial pricing because of our programs that we have, such as the ICI and IEI, which lower significantly the prices that our businesses have to pay.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Let me first congratulate Patrick Brown on his election as leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and also congratulate the other members who participated in the race for leadership.

My question is to the Premier, Speaker. Not a single person in Ontario voted to sell Hydro One, and now the Premier is refusing to hear from people about what they think of this short-sighted scheme.

More than 28,000 people have sent this Liberal government a message that selling Hydro One is wrong. Ontarians don't want to pay the price for yet another bad decision by the Liberals. They want the Premier to stop her privatization scheme before it's too late.

Why is this Premier refusing to listen to Hydro One's owners, the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As the leader of the third party knows full well, we ran on a platform of building this province up, and a cornerstone of that plan is investing in infrastructure. A cornerstone of the plan is to be able to come up with the dollars, to come up with the funding to do that investment was that we were going to look at the assets owned by the province of Ontario, owned by the people of Ontario. We said that clearly in our budget; we said it clearly in our platform.

The leader of the third party knows full well that they ran on the same assumptions. In fact she said, just on May 7, "So there's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns."

I think the leader of the third party knows that it is very important that we invest in the roads and the bridges and the public transit that are needed in this province. We can't do that if we don't have the funds to do it, and that's why we need—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** A physical asset is not a hydro system for the province of Ontario, and this Premier should know that.

She has scheduled four days of hearings on the Hydro One sell-off—four days—and not a single one of those hearings is going to be held outside of Toronto. Selling Hydro One will hurt forestry and mining in the north. It will hurt farmers in our agricultural heartland. It will hurt manufacturing, our innovation sector and small businesses across this province. It is going to kill jobs and make life less affordable, more expensive. It will hurt families in every single part of Ontario.

People deserve to be heard, so why is this Premier refusing to hear from the people who will pay the price for her wrong-headed decision to sell Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** First of all, let me just correct the leader of the third party. She knows there are six days of committee hearings that are happening. She also knows that discussion of the amendments of a bill is part of the committee hearings, so that is why it is six days of hearings that are happening on the bill.

The fact is that if we do not invest in the transit and roads and bridges that are needed in this province, then we will hobble the ability of this province to move forward. We will not ensure the growth and the economic viability of this province or our competitiveness globally if we don't make those investments.

1050

What we are doing in terms of opening up the ownership of Hydro One, retaining 40% ownership, keeping regulatory and price controls in place—we're working to

make that a better company to work better for the people of this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Perhaps the Premier's House leader should send her a copy of the motion before us that we're debating today, which says four days of hearings and two days of clause-by-clause.

Every day, more people are sending the Liberals a message that selling Hydro One is the wrong decision, and they don't want to pay the price for it. This is one of the biggest decisions in a political generation and the Premier is shutting people out.

The Premier talks about transparency—oh, she talks a lot about transparency, Speaker—but she's only holding four days of committee hearings. She talks about openness, but she's ramming this short-sighted plan through this Legislature like a Harper-style omnibus bill.

If the Premier is so proud of her plan and thinks that people actually support it, why is she so worried about giving people their say through hearings across the province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I am very confident that in the six days of committee sittings—and I understand that two days are clause-by-clause, but I spent a lot of time in committee, and it seems that me that the discussion that happens in clause-by-clause is extremely important, because that's where the synthesis of what has been heard gets expressed in amendments.

I hope that the leader of the third party is not suggesting that clause-by-clause is irrelevant, because that is when the bill gets analyzed, every clause-by-clause. I would just—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Much better. Thank you.

Go ahead.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just in terms of the conversation that we have had with the people of Ontario, I would remind the leader of the third party that there were pre-budget consultations across this province: Windsor, London, Toronto, Mississauga, Cambridge, Ottawa—across the province.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. While the Premier might believe her own spin about broadening ownership, people see through it, and they know that selling Hydro One leaves them paying the price.

I was in Brantford this weekend listening to people. Laura Duguid owns a bakery. Hydro heats the ovens and runs the air conditioning during the summer. She says that the higher bills she's going to have because of the sell-off of Hydro One could mean that she will not be able to hire employees and in fact may have to lay off.

It is clear that selling Hydro One is bad for small businesses. What does this Premier have to say to people

like Laura Duguid who have small businesses and don't want you to sell off Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I would say to businesses across the province, to residents and ratepayers across the province, is that we are in the process of making changes that are going to put downward pressure on rates. We're not interested in rates going up; we are interested in a more efficient, better company that is actually going to help the constituents of this province.

In terms of people having their input, there has been much opportunity. There will continue to be, as I said, in the six days of hearings. I would remind the leader of the third party that under the NDP in 1991 and 1992, there was one day of committee consideration for the budget—one day—and we have got six days—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just to remind the leader of the third party that we are putting in place ample opportunity for people to delegate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, it is not just small business people who are going to pay the price. Kim Prince and her husband are barely making ends meet as it is. She is distraught and she is angry. Kim says that if her hydro bills keep going up, she and her husband will literally be on the street.

What does the Premier have to say to people like Kim Prince and her husband, who can't afford to pay the price of selling off Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I would say to people across the province, including in Brantford, is that we must invest in infrastructure. We must invest in infrastructure in every region of the province. We must make those changes, and those changes will help individuals, because they will help them get home sooner to their families and to get to work in a much more efficient way. They will also help businesses. The one thing that business says to me, particularly businesses that want to come to Ontario or want to expand, is that they need investment in infrastructure.

I understand that the member for Timmins-James Bay has said that their plan would be just to borrow more money. They would just keep borrowing. They have no other plan, and that's not viable. That is not a tenable solution. There must be a multi-faceted solution. That's the plan that we put in place so that we can make those investments that are so critical to the businesses and the individuals in this—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, nobody voted in favour of selling Hydro One because this government was not upfront during their election campaign about the fact that they were going to do that, and they know it. It is the wrong decision for businesses. It is the wrong decision for families. There's only one party that's actually taking the time to listen to Ontarians standing up



for public ownership of Hydro One, and that is the New Democrats—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Beaches—East York—excuse me; I'm sorry. Stop the clock.

The member from Beaches-East York will withdraw.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Speaker, I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Bills need to stay under control in this province, not rise because of the sell-off of Hydro One. We are standing up for the protection of the money that Hydro One actually brings in each and every year, which helps us make investments in Ontario.

Will this Premier and her Liberal government stop the sell-off of Hydro One and do right by the people of this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party knows that the Ontario Energy Board sets prices now. The Ontario Energy Board will set prices in the future. The regulatory regime that is in place will remain in place.

We have made a decision based on the reality that we must invest in infrastructure. We've made a decision based on the reality that no matter what region of this province, whether you go to the north—I was in Sudbury talking to FONOM this week. Every municipality in this province is interested in the provincial government working with them to invest in infrastructure. In the north, that means roads and bridges. In the greater Toronto-Hamilton area, that means trains and means public transit. In London, Ottawa, Kitchener-Waterloo and Brantford, it means transit.

We are going to work with those municipalities. It would be great if we had a federal partner working with us, but we're going to work with those municipalities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, for five years you've chosen to risk the lives of Ontarians to save a few bucks on your substandard winter road maintenance contracts, five years in which the auditor revealed that continued lax standards meant uncleared roads that were the direct result of your government's flawed cost-cutting contracts. You knew the dangers for years, and yet you did nothing. You failed to act—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Actually, all of you know better.

Continue.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Premier, you failed to act and people actually died. Why did you refuse to lift a finger when ministry staff warnings cried out for your action to prevent untimely winter road deaths?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener—Conestoga for that question.

As I said last week, when the auditor brought forward her report, it contained eight recommendations. As I've said and as the ministry has said, all eight of the auditor's recommendations have been accepted, and we will continue to go forward working on those recommendations.

But it is important to remember that in 2013 the Ministry of Transportation undertook an internal review. That was before the public accounts committee asked the auditor to do her work. So in 2013, as a result of the internal review that the ministry undertook, Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, second time. The member from Stormont and the member from Lanark, second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As I said, as a response to the internal review that we did conduct in 2013, over 100 new pieces of equipment have been added, both for northern Ontario and for southern Ontario. Additional materials have been brought forward and additional oversight. We'll continue to work hard on this matter.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

1100

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'll remind the minister that the problems on Ontario roads started in 2009, not 2013.

Premier, ministry staff repeatedly issued stern, serious warnings for winter road clearing under your new, substandard contract regime, but you chose to ignore them. You made calculated decisions to save a few bucks by carrying on with your new substandard winter road clearing contracts, and people lost their lives.

Carol Milojkovich, the wife and mother of Robert and Daniel, still wants answers. The families of Alyssa McKeown and Jessica Chamberland deserve answers.

Premier, you ignored warnings. You've ignored your responsibility to Ontario families. Why are you ignoring the calls for a coroner's inquest into these wrongful deaths?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** As I've said repeatedly, whenever I hear of a fatality on a highway anywhere in Ontario, whether it takes place in winter or any other season, of course I feel heartfelt sympathy. I offer condolences to the friends and family of anyone who loses their life on an Ontario highway. It's why it is so fundamentally important at the Ministry of Transportation to make sure we maintain the strong track record that we do have, Speaker. For the last 13 years, Ontario has ranked first or second for highway safety across all of North America. In fact, in 2012 the only other jurisdiction in North America that had a better record was the District of Columbia.

In 2013, the ministry did conduct an internal review of the winter maintenance program. As a result of that internal review, more equipment has been added. More oversight has been added. We have a new procurement out in the Kenora area. We've accepted all eight of the auditor's recommendations and I have asked the auditor to come back next year—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. I was pleased to hear from the Premier of Quebec this morning. I understand the Premier regularly speaks with Mr. Couillard. As the Premier knows, a hydro bill in Quebec, from Quebec's public hydro agency, is about half of the hydro bill in Ontario with our mess of privatization. And now, before Ontarians can have their say, the Premier is planning a sell-off of Hydro One, privatizing even more of the system. The lesson is clear: Well-managed public hydro is affordable; privatized and fractured hydro is expensive and dysfunctional. Can the Premier explain why she doesn't get this?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, going back to the 2014 budget, we made it very, very clear that we were going to examine all of our assets to see if we could repurpose those assets for infrastructure investments. We've done that. We are moving forward with a plan that will see us broaden the ownership of Hydro One. It will not be privatizing. We will have a minimum of 40% ownership moving forward. No other entity will be able to own more than 10%.

Speaking of rates, we've said it over and over again: The Ontario Energy Board decides what the rates are going to be.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Timmins—James Bay, second time.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** They decide, whether it's a municipal utility, whether it's Hydro One or whether it's a hybrid. There are some utilities now that have private interests in them. The Ontario Energy Board will be strengthened. The Ontario Energy Board will ensure that the interests of the public will be maintained.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, as you know, majority private ownership means privatized.

In 2014, Hydro-Québec's dividend to the province was \$2.5 billion, which is up from \$2.2 billion in 2013. But selling Hydro One will cut our dividends. Ed Clark says selling 15% of Hydro One will cost Ontarians \$150 million per year, and it's only going to cost more money as the Premier sells more. The lesson is clear: Well-managed public hydro puts money into provincial bank accounts so we can invest in the province; privatized hydro costs the province money. That means less money for the public to invest.

Why does the Premier refuse to look at Quebec as a model instead of plowing ahead with her fire sale of Hydro One?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I don't hear the opposition talking about the price of natural gas in Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Two-way conversation is not going to happen.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I don't hear the critic talk about the price of natural gas in Ontario. Natural gas in Ontario is rated and is regulated by the Ontario Energy Board. Union Gas and Enbridge are 100% private companies, and their prices are managed by the Ontario Energy Board. In Ontario, for Hydro One or for OPG or for municipally owned utilities, we see reductions in rates that have been applied for. In 2010, Hydro One asked for a rate increase for distribution and received a 9% reduction. OPG asked for a 6.4% increase; they got a 0.8% reduction. The Ontario Energy Board is working—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### LA FRANCOPHONIE

**M. Shafiq Qadri:** D'abord, j'aimerais souligner la visite du premier ministre du Québec, l'honorable Philippe Couillard, un événement historique pour la législature de l'Ontario.

Ma question est pour la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. L'année 2015 est une année historique pour notre province. Nous accueillons les Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains et, aussi, nous célébrons les 400 ans de présence française en Ontario. La ministre a annoncé l'octroi de 1,4 million de dollars pour 62 projets communautaires qui célébreront le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire. Les 100 000 francophones de la région de Toronto se préparent à célébrer lors des neuf événements torontois, financés en partie par notre gouvernement.

Est-ce que la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones peut nous donner un aperçu des 62 projets et célébrations?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Premièrement, je voudrais remercier mon collègue d'Etobicoke-Nord pour sa très, très bonne question. C'est en septembre dernier et justement à Sudbury que la première ministre a annoncé une subvention de 5,9 millions de dollars pour soutenir les projets célébrant 400 ans de présence française en Ontario.

J'ai très hâte aux célébrations, que ce soit des expositions culturelles, touristiques et historiques, la création du parc Champlain Huron-Wendat à Penetanguishene—et je sais que vendredi nous assisterons à la première pelletée de terre—le Festival franco-ontarien à Ottawa en juin, la Franco-Fête à Toronto en juillet et bien d'autres. Ces célébrations ont débuté ce mois-ci et se termineront à la fin d'octobre prochain.



Les francophones et francophiles invitent tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes à venir célébrer avec nous et aussi nos amis du reste du pays.

**M. Shafiq Qadri:** Merci à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones pour sa réponse. Comme l'un des 14 députés au gouvernement qui parlent français, je suis fier de voir que nous célébrons l'apport historique de la communauté francophone à la province de l'Ontario, de Samuel de Champlain à aujourd'hui.

C'est bien de célébrer cet événement, mais est-ce que la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones peut nous donner un aperçu des investissements à long terme pour assurer l'épanouissement de la communauté francophone en Ontario?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Nous parlons de plus de 1,2 million d'Ontariens parlant français, dont la moitié utilise le français tous les jours à la maison. C'est plus de 170 000 étudiants dans nos 12 conseils scolaires francophones et 190 000 étudiants de plus en immersion française. C'est 100 nouvelles écoles françaises construites ou achetées depuis 2003. C'est aussi la création de six entités de planification pour la santé en français, un système judiciaire qui opère dans les deux langues, la création du Commissariat aux services en français, une cible de 5 % pour l'immigration francophone en Ontario et bien plus. Nous sommes fiers de nos investissements.

Je voulais aussi ajouter que le système judiciaire qui opère dans les deux langues, c'est grâce à un ministre, mon prédécesseur du Parti conservateur, qui a mis sur pied cette belle initiative. Alors, je voudrais aujourd'hui lui rendre hommage.

#### HYDRO ONE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Local mayors, plant managers and I read the riot act to Hydro One about unreliable electricity. Two companies in my riding have had more than seven outages already this year alone, every one of them costing over \$50,000 in lost time and product. One plant's lost production now totals over \$1 million. Another manager noted that his sister plant in South Carolina pays half the per-kilowatt-hour price for electricity and has just one outage per year.

1110

That's your record, Minister: double the cost, seven times the outages. Yet somehow Ontario Hydro actually issued a press release last week saying that the issue was fixed. Given the facts, you know that's not true. Why don't you just tell Hydro to stop spinning and start fixing the problem?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Hydro continues to invest in infrastructure—Hydro One particularly. We also have to remind people that there are 77 LDCs—local utilities—across the province that are responsible for maintaining and providing the service. When it comes to Hydro One, they have regional plans, they have regional consultations and they have regional budgets to deal with these particular issues.

There are circumstances, Mr. Speaker, where we see some failures in the system. In fact, they've been brought to my attention by members of the opposition. I've arranged meetings with Hydro One senior people, and we're working on resolving those particular issues. But across the board, Hydro One is one of the most reliable companies in North America. It has been recognized as such, as one of the top five, and their service in terms of the infrastructure is extremely reliable.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the minister: That release was an insult to the local mayors. It was an insult to those companies that met with Hydro One. Quite frankly, they're furious. It was clear to everyone in that room that the problem is getting worse, not better. Just go ask your staffer. He was sitting at the last meeting we had. You and Hydro remain in the dark. Your broken electricity system hurts our ability to bring new businesses to the riding and threatens the future of plants that we have right now. Hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars of investment hang in the balance.

Prysmian Cables, GreenField Ethanol, Goodyear, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and local mayors are not making this up, Minister. What I'm asking you is, will you drag Hydro One to the table with a directive to fix this problem before it ruins our eastern Ontario economy? Will you do that, Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The member should know that we're in a process now of broadening the ownership of Hydro One. There will be significant changes.

*Interruption.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Can you take your earpiece off the mic? Thank you very much.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we expect the new Hydro One, with broadened ownership, to have a board of directors that is more experienced in business than perhaps the one we have now. We're going to be making changes that will make a difference.

But Hydro One responds to those areas that have service problems. They put additional attention to them. If they're brought to my attention—and the member knows—he's brought matters to my attention. We've been dealing with them. Other members have done so as well. Hydro One will be a better company and Hydro One will provide service that is responsible.

The rates in the industrial sector are not preventing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la première ministre. During last year's election and budget, the Premier promised that personal support workers would be getting a raise. They promised to raise PSW wages \$1.50 last year, \$1.50 this year and \$1 next year, for a total \$4-an-hour increase. The message was clear and simple: If elected, the Liberal government would be

raising PSW wages by \$4 an hour. Less than a year later, the government has delayed the pay increase to PSWs indefinitely. My question is simple: What happened?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I'm proud to be a member of a party and a government that has made such an important commitment. We recognize that our PSWs were undervalued and underpaid, and we've gone through great effort to remedy that situation and actually provide in place many other measures that will help to ensure the sustainability of that important health care profession. We've already increased, last year, the wages of our PSWs in home and community care by \$1.50 an hour. We've made the commitment to do the same this year. The member opposite knows, and we've already stated, that that increase will be retroactive to April 1 of this year.

Mr. Speaker, frankly, the reason why we're still working at this is we want to get this 100% right. We're working with all our partners—the PSWs, those who represent them, the service providers, and our LHINs and CCACs—and we're going to be able to move forward as we've committed to do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** PSWs provide services to some of the most vulnerable Ontarians. They deserve to be treated with respect. All of them deserve respect. Right now, it looks like one more example of Liberals saying one thing but quietly doing something completely different. There are lots of PSWs who are watching this morning.

Can the Premier or the minister tell them when they will be getting the promised raise?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** They're going to be getting that second increase of \$1.50 very, very soon. It's going to be retroactive to April 1.

I want to remind the member and her party as well that they voted against that \$4 increase to our PSWs. It's a commitment that we made in our budget. We put it in our platform as well. We're committed to seeing it through, the \$4 over three years. In addition to that, we're increasing the minimum wage for our PSWs to a base of \$16.50 an hour.

We're doing this because we recognize that our PSWs provide such important care to Ontarians right across this province. We want to make sure they're valued. We want to make sure that their profession is recognized and appreciated. We want to make sure that we're providing them with the training to create a sustainable workforce as well. We're doing all of those things. We're following through with that commitment of a \$4 increase.

## NURSES

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Today kicks off National Nursing Week in Canada. Nurses play such a valuable and important role in our

health care system here in Ontario. I've been a proud registered nurse for over 30 years. We, as nurses, are the most trusted profession in Ontario, and I know that my nursing colleagues continue to be there for people when they're at their most fragile and vulnerable. Nurses care for them, comfort them. They are a lifeline, and sometimes they're the last friendly face a patient will see before they pass away. This was certainly my experience as a nurse.

The influence and impact that nurses have on patients and this province can't be quantified or measured because they give so much of themselves in their work. The theme for this year's nursing week is "Nurses: With You Every Step of the Way."

Through you, Speaker: Minister, what is our government doing to support our hard-working nurses in Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I couldn't have said it better myself. I want to thank the member from Cambridge for this important question. Even more than that, I want to thank her, as she's a nurse and she understands the important role that our nurses do around this province every single day. So happy nursing week.

Let me take the opportunity as well, on behalf of I think all of us but certainly this caucus over here and myself as Minister of Health, to thank our nurses for the incredible work they do. The front-line work they do, whether that's working in home and community care, or in our hospital ERs, intensive care units or in our public health units—our nurses are performing such exceptional service to this province. They do it often silently, they do it often without recognition, but they need to know that we appreciate the hard work they do for us.

I look forward in the supplementary to elaborating more in terms of some of the specific measures we've taken.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I thank the minister for his dedication to the nurses in Ontario.

I know that in February the minister and the Premier reconfirmed the government's commitment to move forward with a plan to expand the role of registered nurses to include prescribing drugs. I know this is great news for the nurses and the patients in Ontario.

While I was working in the emergency room at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, the role of the nurse expanded to carry out medical directives when certain conditions existed, such as ordering some lab and X-ray tests and administering some medications without a direct doctor's order, contributing to reducing ER wait times.

The addition of nurse practitioners in our hospitals allows Cambridge residents with minor ailments to be treated more quickly. As a care coordinator for CCAC, I worked closely with nurse practitioners and saw firsthand the valuable role they play.

Through you, Speaker: Can the minister inform the House of how he's recognizing National Nursing Week this year?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you again to the member from Cambridge for this supplementary question.



## 1120

Our government's investments have helped to ensure that there is a stable nursing workforce now and for the future. Since taking office in 2003, our government has added more than 24,000 new nurses working in Ontario, and there were over 135,000 nurses employed in 2014.

Our government has also focused on increasing the percentage of nurses who are working full-time. I'm pleased to say that that percentage has increased by 14% since 2003.

We've expanded services offered by nurse practitioners, enabling them to improve patient care by providing services such as admitting and discharging patients from hospitals, ordering laboratory tests and prescribing medication. Nurse practitioners will also be able to refer patients directly to specialists.

Today I'm going to Women's College Hospital for an announcement, where I will also have the chance to meet with nurses for National Nursing Week in Canada.

## HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The Chesley restorative care unit, Minister, is a success story, but despite its success in providing transitional care for over 300 patients, mostly seniors, you're choosing to close it.

Despite its support for patients as they transition into home care, which is a focus of your ministry, you're turning a deaf ear. Despite its success in reducing return visits to emergency units throughout our area—the most costly form of care—the savings that are realized by the restorative care unit are being ignored.

Minister, no matter what numbers you throw around, and no matter how you spin it, back home we know the truth, and that is that you have turned your backs on rural Ontarians in my area, and you refuse funds to extend the restorative care unit in Chesley.

Minister, will you, once and for all, come to my area, Durham-Bruce, and visit this restorative care unit?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I understand the member opposite. She's a great advocate for her community. I have no doubt about that.

But she needs to understand that this important pilot project, and that's what it is—the South Bruce Grey Health Centre had announced themselves that the restorative care unit at their Chesley site was to close in May.

But I think she also knows by now—I would hope—that I asked the LHIN to press the pause button on the closure to ensure that the best decision could be made for the community. The LHIN has been working with the hospital to ensure that this wouldn't happen without proper community consultation.

In fact, the LHIN is leading the process of working with the relevant operators in the area to develop a long-term plan. An open board meeting at the hospital took place at the end of April. I understand this has allowed the community to have more time to contribute to the issue.

I also understand that the hospital agreed that the program would continue, to allow this review process and consultation to happen.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary. The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. You recently announced \$150 million to create 69 more silos of bureaucracy in our health care system. Your government also recently dumped \$30 million for administration to cover its SAMS mess. You blew \$7 million on consultants to tell you how to conduct a fire sale of Hydro One. But when it comes to our health care, you cannot find money for it for constituents in Huron-Bruce and Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Minister, how is it that your government can find money to cover partisan Liberal boondoggles, but not when it comes to keeping restorative care services in our Chesley hospital?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I hope the member knows that the health links that you're talking about already exist, and they have been lauded, quite frankly, around the world for the focus that they pay to the most complex patients in our community. They allow a team-based approach to actually provide this care.

But to get back to Chesley and the restorative care unit—if the member opposite didn't hear in the first part of my answer—despite the fact that the hospital made the decision on their own a number of months ago to close the unit, I asked the LHIN to step in and the hospital to not move forward with that decision. We put a review process in place. We've got substantial consultation with the community. In fact, when the hospital was going to continue with the closure May 1, we implored them to keep it open so that we could engage in this review process. We're doing that. I think we'll have an answer which is suitable to the community.

## TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. As of this morning, nearly 900,000 kids across the province are being impacted by the Premier's neglect and underfunding of the education system. Our schools are in chaos, and the Premier and her minister hold ultimate responsibility. Contrary to Liberal spin, this government has already made a \$250-million cut to education, and internal documents show a plan to cut about \$500 million more over the next three years. Why is this Premier forcing students and families to pay the price for her government's wrong choices and misplaced priorities?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Once again, \$22.5 billion equals \$22.5 billion; that's not a cut. But they do seem to be quite fixated on the results at the end of last year, where my ministry showed a \$248-million savings. Let me tell you where the savings came from.

The savings came because there were less students enrolled in our 72 school boards than the boards had

originally projected. That led to some in-year savings last year that we reinvested this year, which gives us higher per-pupil spending this year.

Part of that savings came from administrative spending at my ministry. It had absolutely nothing to do with—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I will have more to say in the supplementary, with great delight.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The facts speak for themselves, Speaker: \$6 million cut from special education; 88 neighbourhood schools closed; more than 2,000 child care spaces in Toronto on the chopping block; 115 teachers in Peterborough fired; 260 jobs in the TDSB, including 50 special education staff and 100 ESL teachers, cut. And now it appears that the Liberals are flip-flopping on their commitment to keep class sizes low with caps.

When will the Premier take responsibility for throwing our schools into chaos?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Actually, special ed has gone up \$1.1 billion since 2002-03 and did not get cut this year.

But to go back to this \$250 million they're really concerned about, do you know what happened? School board reserves are consolidated on the provincial books because we supply all the funding. Do you know what? The school boards had more money left over and put in reserves than we projected, so it got consolidated onto our books. In addition, money that we had promised for capital for new schools, new additions and new child care spaces—the people who the money was promised to hadn't spent it yet. We'll spend it in the future, but we didn't spend it last year.

You know what? They campaigned on finding more—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation and concerns great news about an agency under his direction.

As the member for Beaches–East York, I know that many of the people living in my community use public transit on a daily basis. Transit is a key component of their everyday life, and for many, Metrolinx is an important part of their daily commute.

Just a few months ago, the minister and I, along with representatives from the TTC and Metrolinx, had an important pilot project announcement about coordinated fares in my riding at the Danforth Main station. This is why I was very interested to hear last week that Metrolinx has received special recognition for their exceptional service to Ontario.

Speaker, will the minister please provide members of this House with more information on the recognition that was recently received by Metrolinx?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to begin by thanking the member for Beaches–East York for his hard work and his tenacity on behalf of his community.

As the Minister of Transportation, it's one of my core responsibilities to work closely with Metrolinx to develop and implement an integrated transit and transportation system right across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. Our government continues to work in close partnership with Metrolinx to develop long-term solutions for gridlock and transit that will help manage congestion, connect people to jobs and improve our economy.

That's why I am very pleased to report that Metrolinx has been recognized as one of Canada's top employers for young people for the third consecutive year. This competition is part of the Canada's Top 100 Employers project, which seeks to recognize community leaders who have effectively attracted and retained younger employees for their organization.

I want to congratulate the chair of the board, Rob Prichard, president and CEO Bruce McCuaig and the entire Metrolinx team for this honour.

1130

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I want to thank the minister for his response, and particularly for the great work he is doing to help build Ontario—to expand the transit options in the province of Ontario.

There are many young people living in my community, which is why I was so very pleased to hear that Metrolinx has been recognized as one of Canada's top employers for young people for the third consecutive year.

On so many occasions, we've heard the minister tell the members of this House that there are over \$16 billion worth of transit expansion projects currently under way in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, and since 2003, we have invested over \$22 billion for public transit in Ontario, including approximately \$10.8 billion in GO Transit.

I know that those living in my community would be interested in hearing more about the projects that are currently under way. Will the minister please tell the members of this House about those critical transit investments that Metrolinx is building in the region, and especially affecting my constituents—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again I thank that member for his question.

As I often say in this House, I'm very proud to be a member of a government that continues to invest in critical transit and transportation infrastructure initiatives across the province. Of course, Metrolinx is a key partner in delivering on these important transit projects; for example, projects like GO regional express rail, which will give those living throughout the GTHA new travel options with faster and more frequent GO rail service and electrification on core segments of the GO rail network; projects like the Union Pearson Express, coming into service on June 6, which will provide passengers with predictable and reliable service to and from the airport,



while reducing congestion on our roads; and projects like the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, which is the single largest transit expansion project in Ontario's history, and will provide tremendous environmental benefits to our region.

This is only some of what we have under way. Again, I thank that member, and I—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. During a stop in Perth–Wellington, he is quoted as saying, “When we look at some of the bills coming in, we say this is unacceptable.” I want to congratulate the minister for his honesty. We agree: Skyrocketing hydro bills are unacceptable.

Could the minister tell us under whose watch, since 2003, did hydro bills rise to such unacceptable levels?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm very pleased that he raised that particular issue. The context in which I was saying it was the fact that throughout rural Ontario there is a lot of electric heating, and during difficult winters it creates a real burden. That is a legacy that's been going on through different governments. The reality is, we are taking an initiative—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings; second time. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Speaker, he should have mentioned the rest of the article, which indicated that for the first time, any government in Ontario is going to undertake through infrastructure, part of the funds for which will come from broadening the ownership of Hydro, an initiative to bring more natural gas to rural communities. It's a very significant initiative—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, come to order; and the member from Prince Edward–Hastings is warned.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** The minister came to Stratford and finally admitted there is a problem, after years of telling us there's no problem. Now he's blaming a previous government from over a decade ago, and he expects anyone to believe him? My constituents aren't falling for it.

The fact is that many of them can't afford their hydro bills. Two weeks ago, on-peak hydro costs spiked another 15%, with no end in sight. The only thing more unacceptable than our hydro bills is the stunning arrogance of this government.

Minister, what are you waiting for? Will you finally take some responsibility for your own unacceptable policies?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** First of all, there are three other provinces that have higher electricity bills than Ontario;

two, Manitoba and Quebec, are significantly lower than all the other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, what I was addressing was a significant issue in rural areas which has been there for decades. During cold winters, on electric heat, it becomes very, very difficult. We have in our budget and are announcing a program, which we're rolling out, to bring more natural gas service to the rural areas, an initiative we're proud of, an initiative that government never even thought of.

### ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Yesterday marked the 10-year anniversary of the Legislature's unanimous passing of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. It mandated the government to ensure Ontario be fully accessible and barrier-free by 2025—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Who is it to?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** To the Premier.

The Liberals' own independent review concluded that, 10 years later, it has failed 1.8 million Ontarians with disabilities through non-compliance and lack of enforcement. The Premier promised that Ontario would be on schedule when she was running as leader of her party, but AODA enforcement is down, cut in half in 2015.

Will the Premier admit that her government has failed Ontarians with disabilities and commit to increasing AODA audits in both the public and private sectors?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** That's a good question; I actually welcome the question.

We have seen our compliance go up, Mr. Speaker, over the last 24 months, from 16% to 40%—a good increase, but not good enough as far as we're concerned.

We're now coming up to our 10-year anniversary of the AODA. What a great time to celebrate how far we have come, because we are number one in the world when it comes to making headway on accessibility. When it comes to having legislated requirements, we're the only province that has that right now. So we're number one in the world for that. But also what a great time to assess how far we've come and how far we have to go, and the measures we'll need to take over the next 10 years to reach our goal of full accessibility.

I welcome the member's input. We will continue to work to improve compliance. We'll continue to work to ensure that people with disabilities get hired throughout our employment system in Ontario. We've come a long way; we've got a long way to go. It's something we're very excited about tackling.

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On a point of order, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to recognize Yvonne Spicer, Gordon Kyle, Chris Beesley and Roy O'Leary from Community Living Ontario. Welcome to the Legislature.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On a point of order, the member from Welland.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I'd like to welcome Kerry Thomas, David Middleton and Dale Sheets from Community Living Welland Pelham.

#### RECTIFICATION AU PROCÈS-VERBAL

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Monsieur le Président, je voudrais corriger ce que j'ai dit lorsque je parlais d'un système judiciaire qui opère dans les deux langues : c'est une initiative de mon prédécesseur, le procureur général; je voulais dire le procureur général Roy McMurtry.

#### VISITORS

#### VISITEURS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, on a point of order.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to welcome Marek Goldyn, as well, to the Legislature today.

I know you'll be joining me in a few minutes outside, Speaker, for the Europe Day flag-raising event. We'd like to welcome everybody who is participating in that event.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Attorney General.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais présenter à la Chambre Mary Cruden, qui est la présidente de l'association Canadian Parents for French et qui est ici avec nous aujourd'hui.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1138 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize a large group of people who are here from my riding for Community Living Day, and they're in the gallery behind me.

In the gallery today are Bryan Crossett, Franke Benke, Michael Kadey, Bonnie Edwards, Jeanette Branton, Don Skiba, Sandy Stormont, Connie Shuga, Shannon Schooley, Della Derrough, Matt Hoogesteen, Connie Porter, Crystal Saunders, Sandra Bray, Doug Cooper and the CEO of Community Living Tillsonburg, Marty Graf.

Judy Biro is also here. Judy is a staff member who is retiring this week after 25 years at Community Living Tillsonburg, and I want to thank her for her years of service and welcome her to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'd like to welcome, from the Niagara Falls riding, from Community Living Fort Erie—they were here this morning, and I missed them: Margaret Fidler, Tyler Williamson and Terry Sampson. Thank you for coming and welcome.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I'd like to welcome everyone who is here today from Community Living Ontario. Particularly in the east members' gallery, we have Roy O'Leary, president of Community Living Ontario; Chris Beesley, chief executive officer of Community Living Ontario; and Yvonne Spicer, self-advocate president of the Council of Community Living Ontario.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to introduce to the House today three amazing people from Wingham Community Living: Deb Hopper, LouAnne Louthier and Angela McPherson. Please welcome them.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to congratulate all the great help and assistance that Community Living Algoma has provided over the years, but I also want to recognize a friend that I just met. Her name is Yvonne Spicer from Milton. She delivered a fantastic speech at the event over lunch. So thank you very much. Welcome.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** I rise here in the House to welcome Chatelle Jones, Jordan Sharp, Andrew Stewart, Joe Crooks, Ashley Stekel—all from Community Living Durham. Welcome.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd also like to recognize those who are here from Community Living and especially Mike Town, who is from North Perth in my riding.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** We have members of the European Club of Canada here today. They just raised the European flag. We have the CEO all the way from Krakow, Mr. Europa, Marek Goldyn, Danuta Czarnik, Larysa Grant, Georgina Bencsik all from the European Club of Canada. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I would like to welcome to Queen's Park Peter Sproul, the executive director of Community Living Kingston.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome a large contingent from Community Living Campbellford/Brighton—just sitting right behind me. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

It's worth one more time that we welcome all of our guests and friends from Community Living Ontario. Welcome.

It is now time for members' statements.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### SCIENCE HILL DRIFTERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Today, I'm pleased to recognize the Science Hill Drifters. The Science Hill Drifters is a snowmobile club based out of St. Marys, Ontario. Back in February, the Science Hill Drifters organized an event in an attempt to break the Guinness world record for the most snowmobiles in a parade. The record they needed to beat was 820 machines. Two



weeks ago, the Science Hill Drifters would receive the exciting news that they had officially set the new world record. They managed to organize a remarkable 847 snowmobiles. That's quite an accomplishment for a 26-member club.

I would like to congratulate the Science Hill Drifters, including the event organizer, Dwayne Lawrence. I know that this took a lot of work to organize and even more time and energy to submit the evidence to be eligible for the record title.

I would also like to recognize everyone who took part in the parade. People came from all over to support the Drifters and be part of this event. Again, congratulations to the new Guinness world record holders.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** A government of Ontario progress report from 2011 reads as follows: "In 2003, classrooms were crowded, schools were crumbling and teacher unrest was hurting our children and grandchildren. Our students lost too many teaching days to strikes and unrest, and that chaos drew too much attention away from their learning. Private school enrolment was on the rise as parents lost confidence in our publicly funded schools."

That statement was from a government that touted itself as the self-proclaimed champion of smaller class sizes. It was a government that promised not to cut funding for education and limit classroom supports that Ontario families want and their children deserve.

Today, this is a Liberal government that slashes funding for special education, forces the closure of our good neighbourhood schools and makes across-the-board cuts to education. It's a government that flip-flops on its class size commitments and thinks it knows better than the professionals who educate our children.

Speaker, I don't like to speculate what the future will bring, but I took the liberty of writing a future progress report. It reads as follows: "In 2015, classrooms were crowded. Good neighbourhood schools were being shut down and labour unrest was hurting our children and grandchildren. Our students lost too many teaching days, and Liberal cuts to education were throwing our schools into chaos. While parents were losing confidence in our publicly funded education system, they knew that the New Democrats were standing up for Ontario families and holding this government to account!"

### PYTHONS' PIT

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I rise today to tell you about an exciting and inspiring event held recently in my riding. On May 4, I attended the third annual Pythons' Pit event. Presented by sponsors MNP and RBC Royal Bank, Pythons' Pit provides a forum for creative entrepreneurial residents and students of Halton to pitch new products or business ideas to a panel of investors and business moguls, or "pythons," from the local community.

This local spinoff of the Dragons' Den is similar in many ways to the hit TV show, but differs in that contestants receive months of mentorship and invaluable access to business professionals.

Pythons' Pit is a collaboration of all the Rotary clubs across the Halton region, with tremendous support from the community and local businesses as well.

Mentorship defines Pythons' Pit. All through the process, mentors are made available to help participants hone their business skills, including developing their value proposition and refining their pitch. Contestants enter the "pit" in two categories: the open category for entrepreneurs, with a pot of \$20,000; and the high school category, where young entrepreneurs pitch for a cash pool of \$5,000.

On the night of the event, the high school contestants pitched their ideas to the "pythons" live on stage at the Burlington Performing Arts Centre. The winners were four senior students from Nelson High School who engineered a mobile application that will facilitate a more organized and systematic "coffee run" experience.

I want to congratulate Fareen Samji and Tom McLeod, the chairs and community business leaders who led a great team of volunteers, for not only a great event but for contributing to what I'm sure is a life-changing experience for these awesome entrepreneurs.

### INGERSOLL PLAYGROUND

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise to recognize everyone who has contributed to a new cheese-themed playground in the town of Ingersoll. This playground was built as part of the popular TVOKids series Giver, which teaches kids about citizen engagement by providing them with opportunities to see how their good intentions, combined with hard work, can benefit an entire community.

Everyone can tune in to TVO at 6:30 tonight or at the screening party hosted at the Fusion Youth Centre in Ingersoll and watch how Ingersoll's cheese-themed playground came to life.

The playground is the result of the hard work of six kids from Ingersoll and more than 120 volunteers who helped them. This is truly a community project, with contributions from the town of Ingersoll Playright committee; Sinking Ship Entertainment; Amico Infrastructures Inc., which contributed excavating services; and Allen Lumber, donating all the wood. It celebrates our proud cheese and dairy industry history in Ingersoll.

1310

I want to thank TVO for choosing Ingersoll. To date, the Giver series and dedicated volunteers have constructed 33 new playgrounds throughout Ontario that will provide a legacy of new community facilities for generations to enjoy.

I want to commend everyone who was involved in creating this great playground for children in Ingersoll. And I hope everyone will take the time to tune in to TVO tonight and join TVOKids community volunteers, the

Ontario Parks Association and Sinking Ship Entertainment to celebrate the construction at the special screening event.

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak today.

I'm happy to say we had the Premier from Quebec here, who gave an excellent speech today. I'm happy he was here so I can illustrate a point. The Premier of Quebec's province is one of five provinces in this country that currently regulates gas prices in some way. Though they all do it differently, there are regulations in place which help to stabilize the market and, in some cases, protect the consumer against unnecessarily high gasoline prices.

In my riding in Niagara this weekend, gas prices rose 14 cents a litre without any large change in the price of oil—that's around a 56-cents-a-gallon increase. Oil prices since the start of this year have not increased substantially. We enjoyed paying 85 cents a litre then, yet gasoline prices have steadily climbed since then and now we're paying \$1.13—an increase of over 30%. People are having a hard time covering these bills. Everywhere they look in Ontario—gasoline, hydro, food prices—everything is rising.

This government needs to take a serious look into the price of gasoline. If other provinces have turned to regulating their gas markets, why wouldn't we at least talk about it? If oil prices are dropping, then we may have an opportunity to make sure that people can drive to work for less and have a few extra bucks in their pocket to spend in their communities.

### HELEN HENDERSON

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** It is with great honour that I rise in the House today to pay tribute to a trailblazer who raised public awareness for people with disabilities, Helen Henderson.

As members of this House are aware, Helen Henderson, former Toronto Star life section editor and disabilities columnist passed away on Saturday, April 11. Henderson began her career at the Star as a business reporter in the 1970s. While beginning her journalism career, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which led her to pitch to the Star a disabilities column focusing on information and advocacy. Reflecting on her career, she was able to connect with the grassroots issues and put them into the mainstream, shining a much-needed light on disability issues.

After retiring from the Star, she served as the chair of the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto, an organization that provides people with disabilities education to gain independent life skills to facilitate integration into the larger community.

To end, I would like to use the same Neil Marcus quote that Helen Henderson concluded her Ryerson TED

talk with, "Disability is not a 'brave struggle' or 'courage in the face of adversity'. Disability is an art. It's an ingenious way to live." This is the message of Helen Henderson's lifetime work, and this must be the same message we continue to communicate to make Ontario more accessible.

### SCHOOLS IN ROCKWOOD

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Mr. Speaker, in spite of the current uncertainty in our schools in Ontario, last Monday was a momentous day for education in the community of Rockwood in Wellington-Halton Hills. That morning, the ground breaking of the new Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School took place, and in the evening, the official opening of École Harris Mill Public School was celebrated—both in Rockwood.

École Harris Mill Public School, which first opened its doors to students this past September, is a dual-track school with both English and French immersion from JK to grade 5. And when it opens its doors in September 2016, Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School will be home to over 270 students from JK to grade 8. It will become the first new school to open in the Wellington Catholic District School Board since 2010.

With a safe and inspiring teaching and learning environment, I know that students at both these schools will receive an outstanding educational experience, leading to achievement and success. I've always believed that learning is lifelong and that our teachers are caring, dedicated professionals. With the positive support of parents, community and government working together in the best interests of our students, our schools are second to none in Canada.

As the member of provincial Parliament for Wellington-Halton Hills, I want to extend my sincere thanks and congratulations to the Upper Grand District School Board, the Wellington Catholic District School Board as well as all the parents, students, teachers and staff who are involved in these new schools. Together, we can work to give our students the finest education possible. We owe them nothing less.

### HYPERTENSION

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** It is a pleasure to recognize my constituents, Thuy Pham and Rosemarie Childerhouse, and representatives of Hypertension Canada who are at Queen's Park to share their expertise on vascular health day.

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, affects 20% of Canadians, and will affect 90% of those who live a normal lifespan if we ignore the condition.

In our fast-paced, stressful lives it is important that each of us be aware of the risk associated with this condition including heart, kidney, cerebrovascular disease and even dementia. Having no obvious symptoms, it can be a silent killer, and it is a leading cause of death and disability.



The work of Hypertension Canada includes recommending evidence-based clinical treatments and education materials. Early detection is important to reduce its harmful impacts.

Today, many of my colleagues had the opportunity to join Hypertension Canada and their partner Valeant Canada in room 228 to learn more about vascular health.

I would like to thank Hypertension Canada and Valeant for the work they are doing, and I encourage Ontarians to have their blood pressure checked at a clinic, pharmacy or by their doctor.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION ONTARIO ACT, 2015

Mr. Rinaldi moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

### SAFER ROADS AND SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ ACCRUE DES ROUTES ET DES COLLECTIVITÉS

Mr. Natyshak moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 99, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to safety cameras / Projet de loi 99, Loi modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les caméras de sécurité.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The bill authorizes the minister and municipal councils to require the use of safety cameras in construction zones and community safety zones.

Section 205.14.1 is added to the act to create an exemption for the demerit point system for persons who are convicted of an offence based on safety camera evidence.

The bill amends subsections 214.1(1) and (2) of the act to provide that a highway or a part of a highway may be designated as a community safety zone if the highway adjoins or is adjacent to land on which a school, schoolyard, daycare, seniors' residence, community centre or playground is located.

The bill changes all references to photo-radar systems in the act to safety cameras.

1320

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### COMMUNITY LIVING DAY JOURNÉE DE L'INTÉGRATION COMMUNAUTAIRE

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I rise today to recognize Community Living Day at the Legislature. Let me begin by welcoming our guests from Community Living Ontario and its many Community Living groups across the province.

Depuis plus de 60 ans, les organismes d'intégration communautaire défendent les droits des personnes ayant des déficiences intellectuelles. Tout a commencé avec des familles qui ont constitué le mouvement originel d'intégration communautaire et qui se sont battues pour que leurs enfants aient le droit de suivre leur scolarité dans les écoles publiques.

That movement soon broadened into one championing the right of all individuals with developmental disabilities to be full and equal participants in all aspects of community life. Today, everyone in the Community Living movement can look back with pride on these accomplishments.

Today, people with developmental disabilities live in the community. Today they participate, more than ever before, in regular daily activities that others in society might take for granted. And increasingly, many are becoming gainfully employed.

The Community Living movement continues to lead the charge against the biggest barrier of all: the lack of awareness and understanding about people with developmental disabilities. That battle is not yet fully won, but old prejudices are slowly receding.

Inspiré par le mouvement d'intégration communautaire, le gouvernement de l'Ontario est en train de concevoir un plan à long terme de modernisation de ses services aux personnes ayant des déficiences intellectuelles. Nous collaborons avec les organismes d'intégration communautaire et nos autres partenaires pour rendre le système plus équitable et plus homogène à l'échelle de la province et pour le rendre financièrement viable sur le long terme.

We are supporting this work with the largest single investment ever in services and supports for people with developmental disabilities in Ontario. We began rolling out this investment last year, with a three-year, \$810-million investment in community and developmental services. This is an investment not only in the skills, development and personal growth of thousands of Ontarians; this is an investment in their independence, empowerment and inclusion in our society.

Together with our partners in the developmental services sector, including Community Living, we have made tremendous strides already in using this investment to help thousands of Ontarians. Last year, we promised to provide new direct funding to 21,000 people over four years, and in March of this year, I confirmed that we have eliminated the 2014 wait-list for the Special Services at Home Program, well ahead of our two-year target. Now, 8,000 more families can afford programs for their children with special needs to learn new skills or pay for family respite.

We have already approved new Passport funding for 6,000 adults, reaching almost half of our four-year target in just eight months. In addition, more than 500 adults now have new residential supports. Our new Developmental Services Housing Task Force has now concluded its first proposal call for innovative housing solutions for adults with developmental disabilities, and we're very excited about a series of new projects that we are supporting through our employment and modernization fund, many of which are sponsored by Community Living organizations.

L'engagement que nous avons pris l'année dernière est toujours valable : d'ici à 2017-2018, l'engagement du gouvernement de l'Ontario en matière de services aux personnes ayant des déficiences intellectuelles s'élèvera à plus de 2 milliards de dollars par année. Alors que nous entamons la deuxième année de notre plan, nous continuerons d'investir avec sagesse et prudence.

We continue to transform the developmental services system, bringing more consistency and fairness to how the system works, focusing on inclusion and community-based supports, and making it easier for families and individuals to choose the services that meet their needs. These are more than dollars; these funds mean greater community inclusion, personal growth and independence for thousands of people. Yet none of this would have been imaginable without the drive and inspiration of the families and caring individuals in the Community Living movement. C'est grâce à elles que les personnes ayant des déficiences intellectuelles mènent, de nos jours, une existence plus satisfaisante et plus enrichissante.

Let us continue to work together to build a more inclusive society and an Ontario where everyone belongs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** As the PC critic for community and social services, I'm very happy to welcome all of the representatives of Community Living Ontario back to the Legislature today.

Earlier today, I met with some of them: CEO Chris Beesley; president Roy O'Leary; communications director Ron Laroche; policy director Gordon Kyle; and the chair, Yvonne Spicer. And Yvonne, great job at the luncheon and your speech—great job.

I also want to do a little shout-out to Mike Town. Mike is in the gallery from Listowel. His dad, Don Town, and I were rec directors way back in the day, and it's

great to have you at Queen's Park—and for all the great work you do.

It is always a pleasure to hear about the work you do as it is important for so many people in this province. Over the many years that you've been advocating on behalf of Ontarians with an intellectual disability, the way these issues are viewed has changed significantly. Even in the past 15 years, since you have been holding these days, people's perspectives have changed. It has taken time, but we have all come to realize the contribution people with intellectual disabilities can and do make in our province, and that's a great thing.

We all made great strides just last July, when all three parties in this Legislature endorsed the report of the all-party Select Committee on Developmental Services, which was started by our PC caucus colleague Christine Elliott. But we have to continue to work on other issues so that we keep moving forward to help the people who require assistance.

Of primary concern is figuring out a way to ensure that when children and adults require residential services, they are able to find them in fairly close proximity to their home communities. To have to move far away or, as one parents' advocacy group put it, "to have to schlep our children far away from their families and communities and everything near and dear to their heart," is just not right.

People thrive best when they stay close to their support network, which is their community, their family and their friends. Everyone needs a support system, and to be wrenched away from yours makes the adjustment to a new living arrangement even harder. It doesn't matter whether you're a child or an adult; it will have an adverse effect on you.

Additionally, housing should not only be as close to the home community as possible, but it should also be age-appropriate. It is not right for people with intellectual disabilities to have to be placed in long-term-care facilities because appropriate community-based options are not available. It is not the correct setting, it is not the correct care, and it is not the correct environment or respect for those folks who need it. This type of wrong placement doesn't do anything to help an individual, and it might make their situation worse. Beyond this, it's not as if we have an overabundance of long-term-care facilities in this province.

Finally, we need to sort out funding issues and how and when the funds are best provided to the people who need them. This is not an easy issue to deal with, especially given the economic situation in the province, but it is something that must be addressed in the way that makes the most sense. I was pleased to hear the minister say they're going to look again at the \$100 cutback they were potentially looking at.

It is not just the size of the funds involved however, but also how they're able to be used that needs to be looked at. The restrictions that exist on using funding to provide the full range of support a person needs in his or her home is something that should be reviewed. We all



know that it's best to be in our own homes whenever possible, and if we can figure out how we can best do that with the funding that exists, everyone will be better off.

I'm glad that I've had the opportunity to speak today on the very important issues associated with people who have intellectual disabilities. I thank all of the staff, all of the volunteers and all of the family members for the care that you provide to our most very, very special people. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

And I look forward to having you back at Queen's Park in 2016.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** On behalf of New Democrats and Andrea Horwath, it's a pleasure to rise and speak today at Community Living Day.

Community Living supports more than 12,000 clients across this province. They've been celebrating Community Living Day here at Queen's Park since 2000, and it is great to see so many people here and how it actually has grown over the years.

Community Living promotes inclusion; it promotes citizenship; it promotes equality in people who have intellectual disabilities.

I want to welcome our guests from Community Living Ontario, and locally, I want to welcome my guests from Community Living Welland Pelham: Kerry Thomas, who is the community liaison coordinator; Dale Sheets, treasurer for People First; and David Middleton, of course, from Welland/Pelham, who is the president. Thanks for being here today.

1330

For over 60 years, Community Living has advocated for people with disabilities to be fully included in all aspects of our community so they're able to live in dignity and with respect, share in all elements of our communities and have the opportunity to fully participate. Over the years, the movement has become far more than just the right to an education; it has become about inclusion and about changing public attitudes about people with developmental disabilities.

We heard the minister speak about the investment of significant dollars pledged in the most recent budget, but as my party's former critic for community and social services, I think I'd go as far as saying that we have a long way to go yet in this area, and that in some areas we actually have a crisis in developmental services: 21,000 people—adults and children—still can't get the help they need, and wait times for some services are as long as four years.

Recent announcement cuts, like the Work-Related Benefit, are not helping this sector at all, and every day we hear stories about seniors actually looking after seniors with developmental disabilities. One woman in my riding has two sons who are in their sixties; she's almost 90. When she came out to the town hall meeting around the select committee, she said, "Who is going to look after my two boys when I'm no longer here?" There aren't any housing supports available for them. I know that people hear that everywhere in our communities.

The select committee came up with a lot of good recommendations—I think that 46 had all-party support—so I'm hoping that over the short term, and not over the next 20 years, a lot of those recommendations in fact get implemented, including the lack of daycare programs, respite, and group homes, as children finish school and transition into adulthood. The Auditor General's report said that there were serious problems in autism services, including wait times of up to four years.

The developmental services sector is closely tied to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act—I talked about that briefly in question period today—but the Liberal government has failed to implement adequate and timely standards, and 2025 is the target year. Clearly, we know that 60% of the private sector is not compliant with filing the reports, and maybe they're not even compliant with doing what they need to do by this period of time. I think that we, as a government, need to make sure the AODA is implemented and audited regularly, and ensure compliance, because without compliance, we don't have inclusion for the people who are here today and for the thousands across the province.

In conclusion, on Community Living Day, I'd like to thank our guests for being here, and for their continued work, day in and day out. I'd like to thank the staff. Having some connection with my own Community Living, I know how hard the staff work. It's not an 8 to 4 job; they're out in the community with their clients all the time. I want to thank the thousands of volunteers—the families and other volunteers—who commit to all kinds of programming so that the clients can actually live in an inclusive community.

I'd like to encourage the government to bring back the Work-Related Benefit, so that people who are out in the workforce, or are able to go out in the workforce, will have those supports to help them with transportation and other things that they need. There is much more work to do, and I encourage Community Living Ontario and the hundred branches across the province to continue with their strong advocacy for the clients to ensure that we all have inclusive communities in Ontario.

## PETITIONS

### ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government's proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) is a mandatory pension plan which would target small businesses and their employees; and

"Whereas there has been little to no discussion on what the costs would be, or who would pay them; and

"Whereas affected businesses would be hit with up to \$1,643 per employee, per year in new payroll taxes starting in 2017; and

"Whereas affected employees would have up to \$1,643 per year extra deducted from their paycheques, and it would take 40 years for them to see the full pension benefits; and

"Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business predicts the unemployment rate in Ontario would rise by 0.5%, and there would be a reduction in wages over the longer term; and

"Whereas all of these costs would be shouldered exclusively by small businesses and their employees; and

"Whereas public sector and big business employees who already have a pension plan will not be asked to pay into the plan;

"We, the undersigned, do not support implementation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and petition the government of Ontario to axe the pension tax."

I fully support it and will send it with page Ashton.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that was collected by Kim McNab from Lively in my riding. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of beds on the surgical unit, cuts to vital patient support services including hospital cleaning, and more than 87,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year to be cut from departments across the hospital, including in-patient psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical units, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care and the emergency department; and

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to "(1) Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect the beds and services;

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Afiyah to bring it to the Clerk.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I have a petition here.

"Supporting the Implementation of a Cap-and-Trade System in Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing mankind;

"Whereas climate change is already hurting Ontario's environment and economy, causing extreme weather like

floods and droughts, and increasing the cost of food and insurance;

"Whereas right now, polluters are allowed to emit greenhouse gases into our environment for free;

"Whereas good environmental policy is good economic policy and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels will create jobs now and form a central pillar of our prosperity in the coming years;

"Whereas Ontario has demonstrated leadership in tackling greenhouse gas emissions by banning coal-fired plants;

"Whereas Ontarians have been consulted on the path forward for pricing carbon and other greenhouse gases;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that we have a responsibility to take action now, and support a cap-and-trade system for Ontario as the most effective method for significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

I agree with this petition, sign my name and leave it with page Ethan.

### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** This petition is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

"Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost ...

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;



"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

I agree with this petition and will affix my name to it.

1340

#### ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I have a petition presented to me by Alvin Lamb.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas northern Ontario communities are connected across long distances by bus service; and

"Whereas the ONTC bus service is the only form of public transportation available to many northern Ontario residents; and

"Whereas reduction of customer service and the closure of stations will cause deterioration of the overall system of public transportation of passengers and goods in northeastern Ontario; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario committed to providing enhanced bus service to alleviate the loss of the ONTC passenger rail service;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Ontario Northland Transportation Commission bus service must be enhanced to ensure reliable and continuous accessibility including uniform provision of adequate public transportation for all communities and people of northern Ontario."

I wholeheartedly agree, add my signature and bring it to page Cailyn.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices

across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I agree with this petition and I'm going to sign it, affix my name and send it to the table with Misha, a page from my riding of Davenport.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm so glad to stand here in support of my colleague the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka with this petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

"Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

I'm pleased to support MPP Norm Miller. I'll affix my signature and I'll send it to the table with page Colton.

#### SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I have a petition entitled: "Maintain the John McGivney Children's Centre Preschool Program."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre annually helps about 2,500 children with physical, neurological and developmental challenges;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is an exceptional program administered by expert faculty and staff that offers youth and their families a transformative experience that they would not receive in a less specialized setting;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program faces a shortfall in provincial funding;

"Whereas families raising children with special needs incur increased costs for care which the income test does not properly reflect;

"Whereas compliance with the provincial requirements means that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program is unable to be sustained;

"Whereas the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program closure will mean a loss of a valued skill set of expertise from teachers and support staff in our community that will leave some of the area's most vulnerable children and families without proper child care;"

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To make up any funding shortfalls that result from transitioning to a fee subsidy model so that the John McGivney Children's Centre preschool program can remain operational and consider changes to the income test to better reflect the increased costs families raising children with special needs incur."

I support this petition and give it to page Jae Min.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water," and as it has been read once so far I will abbreviate it a little bit.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and ...

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

Speaker, I have thousands of these petitions. I am pleased to sign and support it and to send it down with page Ethan. Thank you.

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition with regard to health care in Muskoka, and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we categorically reject the notion that core services such as surgical procedures should ever be moved to one hospital site in Muskoka and that doing so would have an adverse effect on our municipalities;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We urge our leaders to act now to reject single siting of surgery and/or other core services that would result in the closure or downgrading of either acute care site in Muskoka. We believe the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care needs to address the health care funding model as it applies to Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare, which will avoid the situation as it stands."

I support this petition and will give it to Misha.

### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** These petitions keep coming in. These ones are from Mr. and Mrs. David Kelso from Markham. They've got a couple hundred more signatures.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition, affix my signature and present it to page Colton to bring it down to the Clerks' table.

### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas some establishments have instituted unfair tipping practices in which a portion of tips and gratuities are being deducted and kept by owners;

"Whereas employees in establishments where tipping is a standard practice, such as restaurants, bars and hair salons, supplement their income with tips and gratuities and depend on those to maintain an adequate standard of living;

"Whereas customers expect that when they leave a tip or gratuity that the benefit will be going to the employees who directly contributed to their positive experience; ...



"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support Bill 12, the Protecting Employees' Tips Act, 2014, and help shield Ontario employees and businesses from operators with improper tipping practices while protecting accepted and standard practices such as tip pooling among employees."

I agree with this petition, having brought in the private member's bill, and leave it with page Madison.

1350

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 91, An Act to Implement Budget Measures and to enact and amend various Acts, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and,

That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday, May 20, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, May 21, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and Monday, May 25, 2015, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., in Toronto for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 91:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario Parliamentary Channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 noon on Thursday, May 14, 2015; and

—That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

—That the members of the sub-committee prioritize and return the list by 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2015; and

—That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists; and

—Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—The deadline for written submissions is 9:30 p.m. on Monday, May 25, 2015; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2015; and

That the committee be authorized to meet on Thursday, May 28, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Monday, June 1, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and 9:50 p.m. to 12 midnight in Toronto, for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill;

On Thursday, May 28, 2015, at 5 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Tuesday, June 2, 2015. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The votes on second and third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Naqvi has moved government notice of motion number 21.

I look to the minister to lead off the debate.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this motion as it relates to Bill 91. I very much look forward to hearing comments from other honourable members from all parties in the House.

Bill 91, the Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, is the result of consultation with many Ontarians across this great province of ours. Through direct talks in town hall meetings, telephone town hall meetings and input through our Budget Talks website, Ontarians spoke, and we have listened. It outlines our government's plan to address the needs of Ontarians now and to build Ontario up for a strong and prosperous future.

As you know, Speaker, our government's plan to create jobs and growth has four major components. The first is building modern infrastructure. One of the biggest barriers to jobs and growth in our province is congestion. Our roads and highways are filled with trucks carrying parts that need to get to manufacturing plants, products that need to get to market and people who need to get to work. But today congestion is choking our growth potential.

Often in this House we have talked about the congestion and traffic situation in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. We all know that this region of the province—the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—is the economic engine of our province. We all succeed in terms of both our economy and the quality of life we enjoy so much if we make the necessary investments needed in our public infrastructure, especially as it relates to transit and transportation, to allow for traffic to flow better, to allow for our commerce to flow better and, of course, for Ontarians to be able to get to work and back to their family in a reasonable time.

Speaker, as you know, I have the great fortune of representing the city of Ottawa, particularly the great riding of Ottawa Centre, which is the downtown community of Ottawa. We in my community of Ottawa Centre are the economic centre, the economic hub, for major employment across the whole city of Ottawa—in fact, the greater Ottawa area, the region on both the Ontario side and the Quebec side.

I can tell you, Speaker, given that I live in that community, that you can see the impact on weekdays when traffic comes at peak hours in the morning and then when people go home in peak hours in the afternoon. As the city is growing and the National Capital Region is growing, we see very similar challenges when it comes to our economy, the potential future growth of our economy in Ottawa, but also in the quality of life. The kinds of investments we need to make in infrastructure—the ones we are talking about in this budget, Building Ontario Up—are extremely necessary for communities like the one I represent in Ottawa through investments in our light rail transit plan, both phase 1, which is ongoing thanks to the support of the provincial government, and the future expansion of that project through investments in phase 2 of the LRT; not to mention investments in other modes of transportation, for example, bicycle paths, so that those in the downtown core who choose to walk or ride their bike to work have safe opportunities to do that; and, of course, expanding Highway 417, or as we refer to it, the Queensway, so that members of communities in other parts of the city—the suburbs; the Kanata, Orléans and Barrhaven parts of town—have easier ways of getting downtown and beyond that, as well, outside Ottawa.

That's why our government has chosen to make proper investments in infrastructure a very important priority. It's something we have heard from Ontarians, day in and day out. In the last election campaign, we were told by Ontarians that they want the government to invest in infrastructure. It's something we heard in the

lead-up to this budget, in the extensive consultation that was done, both from the Minister of Finance, as he travelled the province, and also from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The people of Ontario want us to invest in our infrastructure, which could mean public transit like light rail or subways in urban areas, but means highways, bridges and roads in smaller communities in rural and northern Ontario. We treat them all equally, and we understand that that's a priority that Ontarians have asked us to place.

To build roads, bridges and transit infrastructure is something that our economy in the 21st century needs, to make sure that our economy continues to grow and produce jobs. That is why our long-term plan, under the leadership of our Premier, calls for investments of more than \$130 billion in public infrastructure over 10 years. Let me repeat that because it's an impressive number and it's an important number to illustrate our focus and our desire to invest in our infrastructure: We are committing to invest \$130 billion in public infrastructure over 10 years. That's an incredible, incredible investment in our public infrastructure in all communities across the province over the next decade. That also includes dedicating \$31.5 billion over 10 years for public transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure right across the province under our Moving Ontario Forward plan.

1400

To help make these investments, we are taking steps to unlock the value of some of our provincial assets. We are following the recommendations of the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets. As you know, Speaker, we are proposing to modernize Ontario's distribution and sale of beer, improving choice and maintaining our commitment to social responsibility in the process.

For the first time in its history, for instance, Ontario would permit the sale of beer in grocery stores. This is an issue that I've been fairly active in on behalf of the craft breweries that exist in my riding of Ottawa Centre. I would like to mention two—those who enjoy beer, I strongly encourage them to try both Kichesippi Beer and Beyond the Pale, both locally made in Ottawa Centre by local entrepreneurs who continue to create good-paying jobs every day.

The changes that we're bringing forward are going to allow small businesses like Kichesippi and Beyond the Pale, which started as local neighbourhood breweries, to grow even further and be able to supply these great products not only to citizens in Ottawa Centre but in Ottawa and beyond in the province. Those are the kinds of changes we know consumers have been asking for. Of course, we enforce social responsibility as key in making sure that there are laws there to support that.

We are also proposing to broaden the ownership of Hydro One through an initial public offering, or IPO, that will unlock billions in value for the benefit of Ontarians. We will do so while protecting the public interest. Following the IPO, the Ontario government will remain



the largest shareholder and is proposing, by law, that no other shareholder or group of shareholders be permitted to own more than 10% of the company. Most importantly, the new Hydro One will not set the rates for consumers. This will remain the job of the independent regulator, the Ontario Energy Board.

By broadening the ownership in Hydro One, we intend to invest billions of dollars more in critically needed infrastructure that will fuel our economy. That takes me to the point that I made earlier: In order for us to invest in our economy, and in order for us to grow our economy and make sure that we have good-paying jobs along with the quality of life that we deserve so much, we need to invest in infrastructure. I mentioned that we are planning to invest \$130 billion over 10 years in our public infrastructure. This kind of step, by broadening the ownership of Hydro One, is going to allow us to get that necessary investment that we need so that we can build more public infrastructure in our communities across the province. This essentially puts Ontarians in a better place because they will own more public infrastructure that is so needed in the 21st century, like our subways, like our light rail transit system and like our roads, bridges and highways that are key to growing our province and our economy.

The second part of our plan is to invest in our talent and skills. We know that a well-educated workforce is a competitive workforce. Let me give you one such example: I'm proud to say that, if passed by this House, we will renew Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy by investing an additional \$250 million over the next two years. That will bring our total investment in youth employment programs to more than \$565 million over the next two years to help young people get that first job, or find a mentor or start their own business.

Investing in talent and skills is helping to ensure that we have the workers we want and need for continued economic growth. Our natural resource in the province of Ontario, if I can call it that, is our people. We are a province quite different than Alberta and Saskatchewan, which can rely on the natural resources they have in the ground. Our natural resource is our people. It's their talent and skills. That's why it's imperative that we invest in that natural resource and we help grow that natural resource, which means investing in the talent and skills of Ontarians. That is why the investments that we continue to make in our education system, starting from kindergarten all the way to PhD, are extremely important, because what we are doing is harvesting that skill and talent.

I'm very proud to have some incredible schools in my riding. Given the downtown community that I'm in, a lot of the schools in my riding are now celebrating their centennial. Just last weekend, Elgin Street Public School in my riding celebrated their 125th anniversary. It's incredible to see that the school continues to grow in the downtown core. Connaught Public School in Hintonburg, in the same week, celebrated their 100th anniversary.

At the same time, we're building a new edition to Mutchmor Public School, which is an older school in my riding in the neighbourhood of Glebe, and building a

brand new Broadview Public School in Westboro because of the investments that our government is making.

Similarly, I have the great privilege of representing Carleton University as their MPP. I turn around and we see—I know, Speaker, that you are very close to Carleton as well, given that your son is attending Carleton. If you ask your son, he'll tell you about the kinds of investments we're making on that campus, from building a brand new library to brand new labs, and state-of-the-art buildings with state-of-the-art technology. Why? So that our students can get the best education so that they are ready to take on this global economy that we live in. That is why investments in the youth jobs strategy, which is so much a part of this budget, Building Ontario Up, are key.

The third part of our plan for growth is to help create an environment where businesses can be more competitive and succeed. Ontario's combined federal and provincial general corporate income tax rate is lower than the comparable tax rate in every US state. Ontario is the top destination for foreign direct investment in North America. That is a better position than our natural competitors, like California, New York and Texas. But we need to do more and we will continue to do more to grow our economy and make sure that our businesses are successful.

Allow me to give a few more examples. For instance, we launched a 10-year, \$2.5-billion Jobs and Prosperity Fund to partner with Ontario companies to increase productivity and innovation, and help them export to other parts of the world. If approved by this Legislature, we will enhance the Jobs and Prosperity Fund by an additional \$200 million to attract more business investment and creation of jobs.

We would also make the forestry sector eligible for support through this fund, which will be a huge boon for northern Ontario. If approved by this House, we will partner with private investors and business leaders to create Scale Up Ventures, a new \$50-million venture capital fund designed to support Ontario's most promising start-ups through a unique combination of investment and mentorship.

All these investments are critical to make sure that our businesses in Ontario are growing. Again, given that I'm from Ottawa, I like to cite examples from my community of Ottawa. We look at companies like Ciena. The Premier was just visiting Ciena and helping them celebrate their growth in our community in Ottawa. It's incredible. Ciena is a home-grown company, and now they are increasing their footprint, building more space because they continue to hire people. They're building state-of-the-art Internet-related technology.

Similarly, we've been able to attract companies like Huawei, one of the largest companies coming out of China in this Internet age. Huawei's global R&D centre is based where? In Ottawa. Why? Because we've been able to create the right climate to create those highly skilled, highly paid jobs in our province. Ottawa is a great beneficiary of that because of our talent coming out from Carleton University, from the University of Ottawa,

from La Cité collégiale and, of course, from Algonquin College.

1410

The fourth part of our plan is ensuring that everyone has a secure retirement. As you know, Speaker, we will be introducing an Ontario pension plan to help ensure that all Ontarians can retire securely. The framework legislation for the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, or ORPP, has now received royal assent. The next step, which is part of Bill 91, is to establish the ORPP Administration Corp. Of course, the creation of that administration is incumbent upon the passage of Bill 91.

I look forward to the healthy discussion on this initiative, because I know that it is the right thing to do to help build Ontario up. We need to make sure that the 70% of Ontarians who do not have a workplace pension have retirement income security. And one of the best ways to do it, in the absence of enhancing the Canada Pension Plan, the CPP, which is what we would hope to do, that the federal government will in fact enhance CPP—but in the absence of any action by the federal government, we are proposing, as you know, Speaker—and the legislation has passed, the bill to create the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan—that those 70% of Ontarians who do not have a workplace pension do have the security of retirement by making sure that we're making investments today that could help our hard-working Ontarians in their golden years.

Speaker, as you can tell, all four parts of our plan to build Ontario up are encompassed within Bill 91. That is why it is that much more important for all of us, I would argue, to pass Bill 91 in a time frame that ensures that we move forward with those critical investments in our infrastructure, in our talents and skills of Ontarians, and, of course, ensuring that we have retirement income security and viability of our businesses in our communities.

It is important that Ontarians have the opportunity to speak to the 2015 budget and that members from all parties are given the opportunity to examine this important legislation. That is why we did a fair amount of research on this. We have presented a proposal to both opposition House leaders that would increase the standard for committee consideration to six days. This is more committee time than almost any budget over the last 25 years. As I mentioned, we have done a fair amount of research to see that we're almost tripling the number of days for committee consideration when it comes to a budget bill.

Let's compare some previous governments as to how much time they allotted for consideration of budget bills. Under the PC government in 2002, there were zero days of committee consideration—zero days in 2002. In 2000, there were only two days of consideration. In 1997, there were, again, only two days of consideration for the budget bill. In 1996, again, there were only two days of consideration. That repeats again and again and again.

Now, I know the NDP likes to claim that they are open and democratic and transparent. But it's just now talk, because as we know, they have formed a government in

this province, and there is a track record on their part as to how much time they have spent considering bills. Under the NDP, both in 1991 and 1992—and I know the member from St. Catharines will remember that, because he was a member at that time. Both in 1991 and 1992, how many days did the NDP consider the bill? Well, Speaker, it was—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** There seems to be an echo at the other end of the chamber. I need to hear the government House leader, so I would ask all members to respect that.

The government House leader has the floor.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I'll repeat it again, just in case you missed it: We know that the NDP has been in government in this province as well. They do have a track record, so they should not be speaking in a vacuum. Let's look at their record. In both the 1991 and 1992 budgets, respectively, the NDP only allowed for one day of committee consideration. They tabled two more budgets after that, both in 1993 and 1994. I'm sure the member for St. Catharines will remember: How many days did they allow for budget consideration in 1993 and 1994—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Agriculture and Food and the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek are having a conversation. I would ask them to lower their voices a little bit so I can hear.

The government House leader has the floor.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'll go back again to the 1993 and 1994 budgets.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Zero.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** The member for St. Catharines is absolutely right: It was zero days of consideration for those two budgets.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Social contract.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Yes, I think they were looking at something like the social contract, which was a big deal then and is still a big deal today, I would argue. But that budget had zero days of consideration. I would just remind my friends from the NDP to be mindful of their rhetoric as to the number of days for consideration when they're speaking on this motion.

Speaker, as I mentioned, we have looked at the last 25 years of committee consideration and we've tripled that to about six committee days because we want to make sure that Ontarians have the opportunity to participate in this very important process. That's why we're spending three times more days in committee consideration than other parties when they were in government, not to mention, as I mentioned earlier, the various town halls that were done by MPPs—I hosted one; I host one every year; it was very well attended—the tele-town halls, and of course the travel that the Minister of Finance did—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I say to the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, you can't make your hands into a megaphone and shout across the



chamber. It's not permitted under the rules. I would ask him to refrain from doing that and return to the government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** As I was mentioning, the Minister of Finance travelled across the province as well, throughout the regions of the province. Then the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, which does excellent work, also presented a very thorough report and travelled the province, including the north, including places like Fort Frances. So there has been more than the usual consultation on this bill already. Of course, we're enhancing that by ensuring that there are six days of committee consideration so that the work can be done and the budget can be passed for the important reasons that I outlined earlier, before the House rises in June.

Speaker, I would say to you that we have presented a very fair and reasonable proposal to the other two parties. Ontarians are counting on us to establish the body that will administer the new ORPP so that it will be up and running by January 1, 2017. That's a very important timeline that we have outlined, and we wish to fulfil that commitment and get all the necessary work done to get the ORPP set up for Ontarians.

Also, we want to amend the Liquor Control Act so we can enter into a new framework agreement to bring beer into grocery stores to help create more jobs in our province, especially as they relate to craft breweries. I mentioned two in my riding that are excellent.

Also, we will amend the Insurance Act in order to ensure that insurance rates continue to decrease as quickly as possible. We know the NDP likes to talk about this, but then they have done everything in their power to ensure that insurance rates don't come down. One remembers the budget bill last year, one of the most progressive budget bills we have seen in the history of our province, which the NDP voted against not once, but twice.

It was ironic that today they were talking about pay raises for personal support workers, which we—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Okay. The government House leader is about six feet away from me and I can't hear him. I would ask the members to come to order, please, and I again return to the government House leader, who has the floor.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you, Speaker. I'm glad you didn't say that I'm six feet tall because clearly, I'm not. Yes, I am standing close to you.

As I was saying, I was reminding you earlier of how the progressive budget that we tabled last year had increases for our personal support workers. It was ironic to hear the member opposite from the third party talking about that. When they had the chance to support it—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** They voted against it.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** —they voted against it, not once, but twice. It takes quite a feat to get yourself on the record against a progressive budget two times, for a party that claims to be progressive. I think they should be mindful of their track record when it comes to ensuring

that we're helping vulnerable Ontarians, and when it comes to ensuring that we're building our infrastructure.

**1420**

This budget, Building Ontario Up, is necessary to ensure that we have good public transit and transportation infrastructure across the province; that we are ensuring that consumers have more choice; that we are fostering and growing our schools, colleges and universities by investing in the talent and skills of young Ontarians; and, not to mention, that we are enhancing and ensuring that there's retirement income security for hard-working Ontarians.

That is why I ask the members of this assembly to support Bill 91, the Building Ontario Up Act, 2015, and to support this motion so that we can get this bill passed before the House rises in June and ensure that we are building Ontario up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm not going to say that it's a pleasure to speak to this closure motion for the government.

You know, this is a government that—last July, we sat here, the day after Canada Day, and listened to a throne speech. The government talked about trying to be dealing with partnership over partisanship. So I think it's a bit rich for the government House leader to say he presented a proposal to myself and Mr. Bisson, as the two opposition House leaders, and then almost immediately move forward with the motion. I think we were both very clear, as House leaders, in expressing concern about the quickness of passing the budget, regardless of the history in this province. I think we all acknowledge that this budget is a big deal to Ontarians, that people in my riding—and I think my riding is pretty representative of a traditionally rural riding. They want to have some hearings on this bill. From our perspective, we gave a very clear message back to the government that it wasn't enough time.

This government, over the last several months, has systemically “choked,” using a word that the member for St. Catharines used when he was in opposition—they've really choked off debate of most of their bills. This bill—to be a budget bill, and for me to stand here and realize that, after less than seven hours of debate on the budget bill, I've only had the opportunity to have four of my members be able to speak to that bill. To have 85% of the opposition for the Progressive Conservative Party not have a chance to put local comments on the record—I think it's pretty terrible that the government would move forward that fast.

We've seen them, at 10 hours, invoke closure; we've seen them time and time again use time allocation. But to have a budget bill where we clearly came out, prior to the budget, with five proposals that we felt were pragmatic, that we felt were representing our constituents—first of all, to have them not incorporated in the budget bill is one thing, but then to not allow us to be able to put forward proper debate—I just think it's going in the wrong direction.

In question period this morning—quite frankly, I have to hand it to the leader of the third party. She brought up a number of concerns regarding this schedule that the government has put forward. I was quite frankly surprised with the Premier's comment that she would actually feel that—you know, she may have said it was six days of hearings, but the recommendation today from the government House leader is pretty clear. There are four days of public hearings when the public can have their say, and two days of clause-by-clause. So it's pretty bad to be able to say to Ontarians that, you know, you've got five minutes to come to Toronto and make a presentation and that's all—

#### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I guess I need to remind some members that the member from Leeds–Grenville has the floor right now. I would ask all members to listen to what he has to say. He has that right; we owe him that courtesy. We owe that courtesy to all members who have the floor. I would ask all members to do that.

Member for Leeds–Grenville, I apologize for having to interrupt.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thank you, Speaker. Don't take my word for it, members of the government. Why don't you take the word of the dean of the Legislature, Mr. Bradley, for it. I'll quote Mr. Bradley, a speech that Mr. Bradley made on November 24, 1993. He was speaking about closure motions, exactly what you folks have put on the table today. Here's the member for St. Catharines: "I'm concerned about the closure motions because I think they limit legitimate debate"—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Who said that?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Jim Bradley.

"I recognize that a government ultimately might have the opportunity to close down a debate that's been going on a very long period of time. But as I've indicated to the House in days gone by, the purpose of these debates is to canvass public opinion, to make the public aware of what is happening."

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** That's when Jim was a radical.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I agree with the member from St. Catharines.

He goes on to say, "All of us have experienced the situation where we have encountered our constituents and they've said, 'What is this particular bill all about?' or 'How did this bill get passed and I didn't know anything about it?' They are legitimate questions. One of the reasons is that the bills tend to get passed very rapidly in this House.

"Sometimes there are hearings. There is going to be a bit of an opportunity for hearings in this case. I think there should probably be more time provided for that, but also I think it's important to provide more time to discuss the amendments that might be"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm sorry to interrupt. The member from Etobicoke North knows full well he can't take photographs in here. I don't know what he was using his device to do, but it appeared to me he

was taking a photograph. I have to ask him to surrender it to the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Here's what Mr. Bradley said: "If the hearings are going to be meaningful, if the hearings are going to be worthwhile, then I think it's exceedingly important for there to be legitimate debate over the amendments that flow from those hearings. That's what makes a bill stronger."

I could go on and on, Speaker, and quote the member for St. Catharines with some very pragmatic words. But I look at the budget that he didn't talk about, the 2001 budget, where the government actually went to St. Catharines, Ottawa, London and Sudbury and had four days of hearings in Toronto. Ultimately, there were eight days of hearings for that 2001 budget.

Speaker, from our perspective, I think the best way to move forward is to actually have some meaningful debate about hearing dates today. I'm quite prepared to move that the motion be amended.

I move that the motion be amended by deleting everything following "the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and" and substituting the following: "That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Ottawa; Wednesday, May 20, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Thunder Bay; Thursday, May 21, 2015, from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Windsor; and Friday, May 22, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in London for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

"That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet on Monday, May 25, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Tuesday, May 26, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday, May 27, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; and Thursday, May 28, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Toronto; and may sit during question period for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

"That the Clerk of the Committee in consultation with the committee Chair be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 91:

"—Notice of public hearing on the Ontario Parliamentary Channel, the Legislative Assembly's website, and Canada NewsWire; and

#### **1430**

"—That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 noon on Thursday, May 14, 2015; and

"—That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

"—That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2015; and

"—That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists; and



“Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

“That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 10 a.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015; and

“That the committee be authorized to meet on Monday, June 1, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Tuesday, June 2, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and 9:50 p.m. to 12 midnight; and Wednesday, June 3, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and 9:50 p.m. to 12 midnight in Toronto, for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

“On Wednesday, June 3, 2015, at 4 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

“That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Thursday, June 4, 2015. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

“That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

“That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

“The votes on second and third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

“That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.”

That’s my amendment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Clark has moved that the motion be amended by deleting everything following “the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and” and substituting the following:

“That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Ottawa”—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Dispense. Further debate?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I want to rise on behalf of New Democrats to say very clearly that the Liberal government has no mandate to sell off Hydro One. Hydro rates will go up in this province if the Liberal government privatizes Hydro One. Not a single MPP on those benches opposite actually told the people who voted for them that they had the intention of selling off Hydro One. Shutting people down is not the right thing to do. Hydro One is owned by Ontarians. They’re the ones who should decide.

In that vein, I move the following subamendment: that everything after “the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and” be deleted and replaced by the following:

“That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet over the course of the 2015 summer adjournment for 20 days for the purpose of public hearings on the bill, which shall conclude by Friday, August 14, 2015; and

“That the committee shall be authorized to travel for the purpose of public hearings, with all details related to the hearings and written submissions determined by the subcommittee; and

“That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill shall be noon on Friday, August 21, 2015; and

“That the committee be authorized to meet from Tuesday, September 1, 2015, to Thursday, September 4, 2015, and Tuesday, September 8, 2015, to Thursday, September 10, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on each of the respective days for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

“On Wednesday, September 9, 2015, at 3 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period, pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

“That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Monday, September 14, 2015. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

“That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

“That when the order for third reading is called, six and a half hours of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, with speaking rotations recognized pursuant to standing orders 24(a) and 24(b)(ii). At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

“The votes on second and third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

"That in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes."

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Leeds–Grenville on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Can we have a bit of a recess? The way I heard that, it sounded like a substantive amendment. I haven't got a copy of it, either. Do you think you can get—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Yes, you did.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I do need to confer with the table staff to determine whether or not this is in order.

This House stands in recess for 15 minutes.

*The House recessed from 1437 to 1453.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I find that the amendment to the amendment is in fact in order.

Ms. Horwath has moved an amendment to the amendment that everything after "the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and" be deleted and replaced by the following: "That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic and Affairs be authorized to meet"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Dispense? Dispense.

I recognize the leader of the third party to continue debate.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Thank you, Speaker.

The point of the subamendment is to force the government to do the right thing by the people of Ontario, go out to hearings across this province and hear what people have to say about a move that will change the way we deal with electricity in this province, which will impact them in a very negative way financially and which they had no say on, because the Liberals did not run on this in their platform. Nobody knew this was coming. This subamendment actually gives people the chance to have a voice. It's the least Ontarians deserve when it comes to the sell-off of their hydro system.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It's interesting today that we have this rush by the Liberal Party, and a lack of transparency to the people of Ontario in terms of meeting throughout Ontario—which both opposition parties are looking forward to doing.

Let me tell you why this government does not want to stand and speak about these amendments, or why they don't want hearings in other communities; I can tell you. We're talking about hearings in Thunder Bay, Windsor, London and Ottawa. Let me tell you what happened when the pre-budget consultations went to Ottawa. We heard from a couple of different groups. I'd like to tell you about these groups, because they pertain specifically to pre-budget consultations and why they don't want to hear from groups.

We heard from a woman—this is in our Hansard. Her name is Jennifer. She stood in front of the committee. She's an ODSP client. She stood in front of the pre-budget consultation. All three parties were there, Hansard was there, the translators were there: it was a full legislative committee that travelled there to hear from the people of Ontario. Jennifer stood up—God bless her, Speaker; you know, this was the first time she had ever been to any kind of a hearing such as this. She stood in front of us and said, "I have to tell you my story about my hydro bill."

She told us that she has to turn off her hydro at 6 every morning until noon every day—shut it off completely—and then turn it on at noon, but shut it off again at 3 every afternoon until 7 o'clock. This was before a week ago Friday, when those peak-hour hydro rates increased by 15% for people like Jennifer and for companies throughout Ontario that now have left. Jennifer stood there and had to tell us that she has to choose between whether to heat or eat; she has to choose between food and fuel.

This is the message we heard when we were on the road in Ottawa. That's the message they don't want you to hear. That's the message. That's exactly why they don't want to take this out to the people of Ontario, because Jennifer will be there again in Ottawa, and Jennifer will say to all of us, "I was here only a couple of months ago, the week of January 29. I was here in front of you, and I begged you to do something about hydro."

Instead, not only did they not do anything about hydro in the budget; on May 1, only a few days ago, she saw her hydro bill go up 15% in the very hours when she has to shut her power off. To keep warm in the winter, she wears an extra sweater. That's what Jennifer does. That's what Ontario is reduced to.

We also heard from Julie Allen, who is the chief financial officer of Fuel Industries. It's unrelated to fuel, in this case; this is the digital media fuel that is fuelling Ontario. I quote from Hansard—she's talking about tax credits that are helping to fuel her business: "It comes to my attention that the OI DMTC"—that's the tax credit for the digital media industry, Speaker—"is under review as one of the tax credits that you're looking at, and I just want to talk a little bit about how I feel it's important to the province and to interactive digital media."

Julie Allen goes on to say: "The OI DMTC is really a big part of the economic growth in Ontario. There's so much growth potential in the interactive digital media industry. Interactive digital media: The founders are entrepreneurial, high-risk taking, high-growth companies." This is what Julie is saying to the committee. "I feel it's something that should be taken into account and focused on because there's so much growth potential."

"It's also a very young industry ... and still growing. This sector influences the way we live, we learn, we educate and we entertain. It also creates very valuable jobs for the province of Ontario."

**1500**

Julie goes on to describe, at our committee: "We have grown 140% from 2007 to 2014, and this is how long



we've been using the Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit. The support of the program has meant so much to our growth and our ability to stay in Ontario and continue to evolve." This is the message you hear when you get out and you meet with the people and the businesses in Ontario.

She said, "I think the OMDC, as well, is really important to help with global competitiveness. It's necessary to grow this industry, but the interactive digital media ... has no physical boundaries. We are constantly competing on the global market. One hundred per cent of Fuel's revenue ... is export; we don't have any Canadian sales. All of our time and effort is focused on competing with international companies. Again, there are no physical boundaries with interactive digital media. We need to be competitive...."

"We're ... competing for labour resources on the global market. We're recruiting resources out of province and out of country to attract skilled labour, highly educated individuals, to come to permanent full-time positions."

She ends with saying, "I think OIOMTC," the tax credit, "is a beneficial program for the province and the growth of interactive digital media. The program promotes economic" development and is "a very young industry that has amazing potential. It also helps Ontario companies be globally competitive in the industry and creates very high-paying, skilled jobs in Ontario and keeps our youth here and working."

Well, Speaker, they didn't listen. They did not listen to Julie Allen, chief financial officer of Fuel Industries, about the digital media tax credit. They didn't listen to anybody who is in the industry because the government is reducing support. That's what this budget did, it reduced support through narrowing the eligibility for the Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit, the exact tax credit that Julie spoke of that helped her get started. The second it's gone so are these businesses.

We've also seen now changes to the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit, the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit—I'm going to read letters from those folks as well—the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit, the Ontario Sound Recording Tax Credit, and the Ontario Computer Animation and Special Effects Tax Credit.

The government is cutting that tax credit and they're doing it immediately—not grandfathering in the businesses that have already started their production here in Toronto, in my community of North Bay, and Sudbury, Thunder Bay and the Soo,—the northern communities that are so blessed to have attracted so many films. Here in downtown Toronto, so many films are under way; so many TV shows are under way—it's amazing. What do these guys do? The first scent of good news in a sector—boom. They're going to save \$10 million, according to them. They're going to lose a billion, but they're going to save themselves \$10 million. You talk about that expression "can't see the forest for the trees," well, we know they can't see the forest—that gets us into the Far North Act and the 63 businesses in the forestry sector that are

gone. They can't see the forest for the trees; that is the problem. That's why they don't want to get out and do these hearings throughout Ontario.

When they go to Thunder Bay, Windsor and London—last time, they heard loudly and clearly from businesses talking about the Ontario registered pension program; they heard from these businesses that said, "This is going to kill our business." This is the one where the employees and the employers each have to put 1.9%. The employees' salaries will be reduced by 1.9%; the employer now has to add more money. When we were in London, a business in London said to us, "I got to tell you. I got 15 employees today. When this ORPP thing comes through, I'm firing one of them, and I'm going to take their salary and I'm going to give that money to the employees, because they're darned well going to ask for a raise. They can't live with 1.9% less on their salary. They're going to ask for a raise, and I've got to top them up 1.9%. So I'm going to fire one, use that money to pay my share for the other 14, and I'm going to make them work harder." That's what we heard when we were in London. That's exactly why these guys do not want to get out there, back into Ontario. I can't imagine what kind of armour they're going to have to wear to get out there and face the Jennifers of the world who can't afford to heat or eat.

This is exactly what we heard. In fact, we talked about the fact that their own document that was written by the Ministry of Finance—it's called Confidential Advice to Cabinet. This is under the sub-headline "Not recommended." This is exactly what they told the Premier would happen: "Any increase in taxes would have negative long-run macroeconomic impacts on GDP and employment." That payroll tax would have "the largest negative impact on employment." That's what the Ministry of Finance told the Premier, and that's exactly what all these businesses, including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and private businesses that came—but not just businesses; charities, people like the YMCA, those types of groups also. They all have to pay the ORPP. They have no idea where they're going to get the money, and they are the very people who are saying, "We're going to have to let somebody go to pay this money."

The Ministry of Finance told the Premier that this payroll tax will cost 18,000 lost jobs in Ontario for every \$2 billion that is raised. That is exactly the punishment that will be inflicted on these businesses.

Did they listen? Nope. They went ahead a week ago, passed the ORPP and patted themselves on the back. Last week, it received royal assent, and the businesses are speaking loudly and clearly already, right across Ontario.

We had 2,700 fewer businesses last year in Ontario than were there the year before. This is the kind of discussion they don't want to have by going to Thunder Bay and Windsor and Ottawa and London, because we heard loudly and very clearly from all these businesses.

I'll read you another letter from one of the employees of one of these people in the film industry that this

government is punishing. We are going to see immediately hundreds, and very shortly thousands, of jobs lost, because these jobs are very, very mobile. They are mobile, Speaker.

"As a citizen of Ontario and an employee working in the film industry in visual effects, I am writing to you to express my concerns with the proposed changes.

"The film industry makes money for Ontario." The guy in the film industry understands that, Speaker; they don't. "We generate millions of dollars of revenue for the province through income tax of staffers working in the industry and through supporting local businesses." Think about the hotels. Think about the restaurants. Think about all these businesses in downtown Toronto. Think about the businesses in Powassan, where I attended while they were filming a movie recently. Mattawa, a small community in my riding, had two major movies, one for Hallmark. When you think of the stars that come up to Mattawa and Powassan and downtown North Bay and Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay, who have been in and out of there in the last year, kiss all that goodbye, because under the current tax credit system, film production and visual effects services—their spend has almost doubled in the last decade. Well, Speaker, as soon as these guys see somebody succeeding, spending money and bringing tax revenue in, the first thing they want to do is shut the tap off, cut the industry. No, no, no, they don't want to generate all these billions of dollars in revenue in Ontario. They're ready. They want to save \$10 million.

**1510**

I remember the last time they saved money. Very tragically, we heard about their winter road maintenance. They wanted to save \$36 million. There are priorities and there are choices to make. And one of their choices was to knowingly and purposely cut back on winter road maintenance, and it resulted in deaths throughout all of Ontario. I tell you, Speaker, how much it hurt and how much it pained me over that Christmas period. December 27, 2011, to January 3: In that period, 10 people under the age of 20 died. Eight of them were teenagers; one was eight years old.

This is what happens when you do the cuts that they did to winter road maintenance. The Auditor General told us that. It wasn't about the privatization that worked well for nine years; it's since these guys came in in 2009 and changed the rules and took away the oversight. That's the \$36 million they saved. That's their idea about savings, and we saw the result.

Now they're going to crush an industry, an industry that generates billions of dollars. They're going to crush that industry to try to save \$10 million. I don't even know if they can save that. We don't believe any of the numbers they've presented to us, Speaker. I have no idea how they imagine they're going to save \$10 million.

Why don't we have any credibility in the numbers? I've spoken about my favourite chart of all time, my absolute favourite chart. Here it is in Building Ontario Up, Budget 2015; it's what I've referred to many times in

this Legislature as the fake chart. This tells you why the people of Ontario do not believe any of your numbers—page 199 of the budget. Here's the fake chart, the one that we showed in the Legislature many times—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I appreciate that the member wants to make reference to the budget, but he can't use it as a prop.

I return to the member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. When I saw the minister use it so many times, I presumed you were allowed to do that in the House. I apologize; I did not know that.

Let me tell you about the chart in the Ministry of Finance's own words—why I call this "the fake chart." In my copy of Focus on Finance, which you can download at fedeli.com—my shameless plug again. Let me read to you from page 14 and 15. I put the fake chart in here and referenced the fake chart. The wording goes on—and I'll have to use it carefully, because I know I had to withdraw two words the last time I read this. I remember the words now, and I will make sure I don't use those two words.

"In fact, the Ministry of Finance admits the benchmark of progress—an estimated \$24.7-billion deficit—is a complete fiction, 'was never a real expectation' and 'was a deliberate policy' to project 'a worst-case outcome.'" In other words, what we saw in the chart is not real. "They also admit 'the path to balance was then drawn from there, assuming a straight-line trajectory of declining deficits.'" What it's saying is, they have a chart where they start out with a fake number, \$24.7 billion, and they want to get to zero, so they draw an absolutely straight line and then fill in the lines down, and that's going to be their deficit number for the year. Every one of those numbers was made up—absolutely and completely made up.

In fact, "'It was assumed that spending would be constrained to whatever it takes to hit these targets.'" That's what they said: "We drew these imaginary lines, and wherever the line went across, that was going to be our budget number." Throwing a dart at a chart on the wall could have been even more accurate than this, Speaker.

It goes on to say, "Essentially, someone laid a ruler across a graph, drew a straight line, and that's the extent of the government's plan to balance the budget." So you wonder why we don't believe any of the numbers we get from these guys. "They also divulged, 'Over the medium term, we have notional targets by sector that add up to the deficit numbers, but not yet full plans to deliver on them.'" It means, "We know what the number is going to be. We have a notional target. We think it's going to be—"

Of course, they were wrong. They didn't even match their own fake chart. They went from a deficit of \$9.2 billion and it got bigger, to \$10.5 billion, and it got bigger, to \$10.9 billion. It went the wrong way; they couldn't even meet their own fake numbers here. But they have "not yet full plans to deliver on them. For the



extended outlook, neither sector targets nor plans yet exist.” That’s an exact quote from the Ministry of Finance. “The once-secret document”—that we got through the gas plant scandal—“concludes ‘in order to hit the deficit targets, spending growth going forward has to decrease dramatically.’ But as we’ve seen, that restraint never materialized.” The budget has \$2.4 billion in increased spending.

We’ve got a fake chart, fake numbers, and we’ve got a government who will not go back out to the people because they sure as heck did not like what they heard from them last time. They did not like hearing from the film and digital and apprentice groups, all three, who spoke very clearly. They knew it was coming. They heard the rumblings from this government that the lifeblood for their very industries was about to be cut. They knew what was coming. They warned us, they warned everybody in the committee, and yet this government went ahead. Despite all of the good advice they got from people, they went ahead and rammed through this budget.

They’re time-allocating everything, Speaker. They do not want debate in this Legislature on any of our issues. They do not want to hear from the people. They do not want to hear from the legislators, the lawmakers. They don’t want to hear from anybody because they may have a differing opinion. They don’t pay attention to our own slogan in here about hearing the other side. Speaker, they don’t want to hear the other side. This budget was made a long, long time ago.

When we saw the budget binder—it’s about four inches thick. The budget was read on a Thursday and on Friday, the budget binder was out with details about the sections in the act. That whole thing with the Ed Clark committee and the report? A facade. The details on how to convert that into laws was all done, section after section. Stripping away all the powers of the Integrity Commissioner, taking away the powers of the Auditor General, taking away the sunshine list, taking away the Financial Accountability Officer; the moment one share is sold, taking Hydro away from crown agency status: All of that was already done, and they’re pretending it got done within days, if not hours, of the time that the budget was passed. What a pile of nonsense.

They talked to us about this \$130 billion in infrastructure, which is nothing more than a reannouncement. If you want further proof of that, when you look at last year’s budget 2014, which I won’t hold up as a prop, but I’ll read from it: “dedicating proceeds from 7.5 cents of the existing provincial gasoline tax for public transit and transportation” etc. The new one, page 44: “dedicating proceeds from 7.5 cents of the existing provincial gas tax,” again and again. It’s the same words. They did nothing but a cut and paste over the budget here. It’s the same announcement. They made it sound like it’s all brand new, all-new, big information—none of it.

But there’s one tricky little part of this \$130-billion announcement that is new. In last year’s budget 2014, they talked about how they needed \$3.1 billion of asset

sales to make it happen: \$1.1 billion this year, a billion the next, half a billion the year after and half a billion the year after. They talked about it being the GM shares, the sale of LCBO warehousing, the sale of the OPG building. All that was accounted for in the \$3.1 billion. But now, this year in the budget, all of a sudden they need to sell Hydro One in order to make their plan. They’re talking about selling Hydro One, putting a portion of the money against the debt of Hydro One—and they changed the law to make that happen, because it was against the law to do it. Speaker, they do that and, sadly, that is going to raise your hydro bill because you’ve still got the mortgage. It’s like you sold the house, took the cash and bought a car with it instead of paying off the bank. That’s exactly what they’re doing. The bank loan, the mortgage on Hydro is still owed. It’s got to come from somewhere. It’s going to come out of your pocket, Speaker. It’s going to come out of the people. It’s going to come out of Jennifer’s pocket in Ottawa, which is why they don’t want to go to Ottawa and face her yet again.

Here we are now. They’re telling us they’re going to take the other part of that Hydro sale and put it into transit. Well, that is absolute sheer nonsense. According to their own budget, that money was already budgeted. They can ostensibly say that they’re putting it into transit, pat themselves on the back again, but then all they do is haul out the money that was already there and bail themselves out of their awful deficit that went from \$9.2 billion to \$10.5 billion to \$10.9 billion.

That’s what they’re doing, Speaker. It’s a shell game with our money. That’s exactly what they’re doing. Their own budget tells us they only needed \$3.1 billion to make it work last year and now, this year, they’re going all in. They’re taking the \$3.1 billion, plus they need the sale of Hydro. That does not fix the overspending problem they have. The problem is not a revenue problem in Ontario; they have a spending problem. They cannot help themselves from continuing to spend, spend, spend. It’s a tax-and-spend: They tax you and spend your money. That’s exactly what they’re doing.

1520

Now, they’ve got this extra money that came from the sale of an asset. They didn’t fix the core problem, what we call the structural deficit. It’s still there. The expense is still there. When you sell that asset this year, what are you going to do next year? What are you going to sell at that volume next year to eliminate your deficit if you haven’t solved the core problem?

These guys have not found a tax they don’t like. I’ve told this story a couple of times and it just boggles my mind. Here’s an example of the sort of tax-and-spend that they’re all about. Here you’ve got a company, one of the very few left exploring in northern Ontario after the Far North Act got forced through by these guys—you’ve got a company that found diamonds, the only company in Ontario that found diamonds. So they begin to go into the construction of the mine. Now, De Beers has already spent millions on getting that mine up and running. It’s not quite running at the time. These guys knock at the

door and tell them, "Congratulations. Welcome to Ontario. Guess what? We're putting in a diamond tax today." Can you imagine? But they said, "Oh, don't worry; we're going to tax every diamond producer in Ontario." Of course, there's only the one and there will only ever be the one. This is what they're all about. They will tax anything that doesn't move and some things that do, and spend your money.

When I think of the Ring of Fire, the place in the Far North where I've been to four times, and I saw the hundreds of people in 2011, 2012 and 2013 working there—more than 250 people. When I was there in 2014, you know what happened? Cliffs resources was moving out that day. I watched as they packed up their boxes. Not only did they move out of the Ring of Fire, they ended up moving out of Ontario. They ended up not only selling their base camp; they sold their claim. They've given up on Ontario. Why? Because these guys can't put two and two together. They could not put the deal together.

Chromite, the mineral that makes stainless steel, was discovered there eight years ago now. There is still nothing there after eight years because these guys can't put it together. Do you know what the mining companies have told me in my office when they come in for stakeholder meetings to talk about it? "Vic, we need everything you can do to help us with the Ring of Fire." They say, "You know one of the things that worries us? That diamond tax they did to De Beers after they were in for billions, they're going to do that to us. They're going to bring in a chromite tax." I know the member from Parry Sound stood in this Legislature and asked that very question, and did not get a no from this government. They would not say no when asked if they are going to implement a chromite tax once these companies are halfway through.

This is exactly what this government is all about. They do not want to get out there, throughout Ontario, and travel and confront—that's what it will be—confront Jennifer who has to decide between heat or eat, food or fuel. They do not want to confront all of the film industry. That's why they will not travel.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** During the last election in June 2014 or during the pre-budget consultation in January of this year, the Liberals never once said, "We are selling Hydro." They never once said, "We are privatizing Hydro." Yet this is such an important decision because it is irrevocable.

That's why we have moved an amendment to give people a chance to be heard. We want the people of Ontario, the people of Nickel Belt, from Ivanhoe Lake to Alban, from Nairn Centre to Wanapitei—we want to give them a chance to be heard. Because once Hydro is sold, it is irrevocable.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Speaker, people in Windsor—Tecumseh had no idea the Liberals were going to sell

60% of Hydro One. They didn't campaign on it in the last election. It's not even spelled out in their budget. We want a legislative committee to come to Windsor and Essex county and listen to our voices on this major and drastic policy change.

In 1907, 19 municipalities held a referendum and voted for public power in Ontario. Public power: huge support in Toronto, Kitchener, Waterloo, London, Hamilton—right across the province. By 1913, more than three dozen communities, including Windsor, voted for public power. Hydro One is still the only transmission network that was created by a direct vote of the people it was meant to serve.

If you start selling Hydro One—it's a shameful repudiation of the most democratic referendum process in Ontario's history. Shame on you for even thinking about it. Take it on the road. If you believe in it, sell it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

Ms. Horwath has moved an amendment to the amendment to government notice of motion number 21. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I've received not one but two notices of deferral: "Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the amendment to the amendment to government notice of motion number 21 be deferred until the time of deferred votes tomorrow." It is signed by the chief government whip.

*Vote deferred.*

## 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I appreciate the opportunity to debate the budget motion. I wish to let you know I will be sharing my time with the member from Sarnia—Lambton.

Essentially, in addressing this budget motion, the most important issue that we are addressing is what I consider to be the grave financial situation across the province of Ontario. My colleagues and I have identified that. Actually, well before the budget we identified a number of issues that we raised and that we felt were very important for people in Ontario to have us go forward to support this budget. We laid this out ahead of time. I feel that there were probably five sensible approaches—five budget asks, if you will—that we specifically routinized in the form of a motion. It was a motion that was debated before this Legislative Assembly just a day before the



budget was released, and there was a very clear indication that we would base our support on fulfillment of these requests, five to be specific.

Number one, we requested that this government walk away from the proposed Ontario registered pension plan, the ORPP.

We requested a commitment to not levy a carbon tax under the guise of a carbon trade-and-tax system.

1530

We were adamant that this government indicate a sensible plan to fix the home care issue that many elderly people are dealing with—the kind of pressures we're seeing on our hospitals indirectly because of not only a lack of long-term-care facilities, but, very simply, an inadequate approach to treating people at home.

Dealing with energy prices was our fourth request.

Last, we requested a commitment to a credible plan to balance the budget by 2017-18. We know that the members opposite indicate that they are going to balance the budget by 2017-18, but they still have not presented a plan that makes sense, in our view.

We debated that motion the day before. Items were voted on. You may recall, Speaker, that our motion didn't pass.

Just to go back to the ORPP, the proposed pension plan brought forward by Premier Wynne, the plan would see both employees and employers dinged through a payroll tax. Employees would pay 1.9% of their total salary into a general pool. As a result of this payroll tax alone, just on the employee side of the ledger, obviously people in Ontario—those who are working—will see less money in their pockets. They're going to see the place where they work have an increase in the cost of doing business. Specifically, businesses themselves will also have to pay 1.9% into this, essentially, payroll tax.

This government had a number of documents. Information was acquired that indicated that every \$2 billion that is collected across the province through this payroll tax would result in the loss of something on the order of 18,000 jobs. This was advice to the government. They ignored the advice and forged ahead anyway.

The second area of concern for us was the carbon tax, the cap-and-trade proposal. This was discussed at great length this morning by all three parties, including the Premier of Quebec. A cap-and-trade proposal seems to essentially be designed to drive up the cost of any carbon-based fuel. We already have some of the highest energy rates in North America; now we are staring down the barrel of a cap-and-trade, cap-and-tax system. Essentially, it will become a tax on just about everything. It will make it more expensive to heat your home, operate your car or run a tractor, a truck or a tractor-trailer, and by extension it would raise the cost of essentially every energy-dependent consumer good we produce, import or transport across the province of Ontario.

According to Environment Canada, Canada generates something like 1.8% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions nationwide. These are carbon dioxide emissions. It's always odd for me to hear people talking about a

carbon tax. It's not a carbon tax; it's a carbon dioxide tax. But I guess some of these details aren't that important to some people.

Sure, it might be good to lead by example. We certainly saw that down in my riding with the termination of coal-based electricity generation at the gigantic Nanticoke generating station. That was a tremendous hit to our coal-based economy in my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk. You can argue that it's good to lead by example, but the truth is that Ontario's contribution to carbon dioxide emissions—Canada's contribution, essentially—is relatively minor.

A carbon tax—a cap-and-trade system—will obviously put Ontario's manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage. That does not go very far, as far as luring new industry or new business to the province of Ontario.

I made mention of home care. Government spending habits are resulting in people being turned away from home care. CCAC operations, for example, do not appear to be linked to outcomes. That's partly an administration issue, a management issue, but the ultimate responsibility lies in this Legislature. We've talked about this at great length. We feel that we should do everything possible to increase the quality of home care to allow people to stay in their homes and hence have more hospital rooms available for those who need them the most.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Did you mention you're sharing your time with me?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Oh, I thought I did mention it. I am sharing my time with the member from Sarnia-Lambton. Who knows? If I did mention it before, well, he got his riding mentioned twice in the House. That's all good. That's Bob Bailey, by the way.

When home care is not available adequately, when people are unnecessarily in a hospital bed, that's essentially a government closing hospital beds by not making them available.

There's not only a lack of home care, but since this group opposite took power, we have not seen the construction of long-term-care beds. When we were in government, there were something like 20,000 long-term-care beds constructed across the province of Ontario.

Electricity, and I qualify that: rising electricity prices. It's another reason we, those of us in opposition, are pushing for change through this budget process. This government's long-term energy strategy essentially has been one fiasco after another, from defective smart meters to the gas-fired power plants scandal. The most recent addition to the list would be the proposed sale of Hydro One. We now know 77% of Hydro One full-time employees and 80% of OPG employees—Ontario Power Generation—are on that sunshine list, the \$100,000-a-year sunshine list.

The global adjustment electricity tax on business: This was a tax to pay for this government's long-term green energy plan, the solar and the wind turbines that still don't make any economic sense. Global adjustment on business has increased by 1,200%. It's collected something like \$50 billion since 2006.

One other point: balancing the budget. This is a very important call from our opposition. It's been our call for 12 years. It's still not in sight. For the third straight year this deficit has increased. We're obviously heading in the wrong direction. Ontario's Auditor General warned us to that effect and indicated that if the deficit, let alone the debt, isn't brought under control, it will crowd out essential services like home care, health care in general and education.

Essentially, we do not support this proposed budget. People can no longer afford a budget like this and they cannot afford to support a government like this.

I should wrap up, Speaker. My colleagues and myself, we can't support this budget. We laid out five major reasons for that, five areas that we felt should be included in the budget that would help make people in Ontario a little better off. None of them were addressed, certainly not addressed in the way that we requested. In fact, in some areas it was totally the opposite. These were the minimum. This was all we asked for. Regrettably, this government did not come through.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member from Sarnia–Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** On behalf of the residents of Sarnia–Lambton, I'd like to take this opportunity to speak to the government's budget motion before the House. The budget motion as it is before the House reads, "That this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government."

1540

After more than eight years as the member of provincial Parliament for Sarnia–Lambton, I believe that I can say with absolute certainty that the residents of Sarnia–Lambton do not approve the overall budgetary policy of this government.

As a border community, located about three hours by car and even longer by train from Queen's Park, the feeling most often expressed by Sarnia–Lambton constituents to my office is that this government has ignored many of our concerns, instead focusing on the greater Toronto area.

It's worth noting that in the Premier's only visit, as Premier, to Sarnia–Lambton, she stated to the Sarnia Observer, the local newspaper, that Sarnia–Lambton would not be forgotten on her watch. Despite not receiving any specific mention in the 2015 budget, Sarnia–Lambton patiently waits for the Premier to keep her promise to Sarnia–Lambton.

We have a number of very important projects, such as the Lambton College health sciences building and the SABER petrochemical project, which would benefit not just this community but the province as a whole. We patiently await attention. I look forward to the Premier's commitment on these projects in the near future.

While Sarnia–Lambton was not mentioned specifically, I would like to point out that there are some elements of the budget bill that I do see as positive for Sarnia–Lambton, including expanding the natural gas network to rural Ontario. This is a long-overdue move by

the government to work towards expanding Ontario's natural gas network into the rural communities of Ontario.

There is an abundance of affordable natural gas at Ontario's doorstep, and Ontario should be taking advantage of this resource, though I recall a vote just last Thursday which could call that into question. As I recall, we had a vote last week which could restrict that kind of gas. Fifty per cent of the gas, ladies and gentlemen, at this time in Ontario, in Toronto homes powered by electricity—50% of that gas today comes from the north-eastern United States. That's part of the Marcellus shale gas. That's something I'm going to pursue and I think that this government really needs to take a look at it.

This gas expansion would mean lower energy costs for farmers and all small businesses in rural Ontario, and another option for consumers to heat their homes. Surprisingly, even in a community like Sarnia–Lambton, which probably has more pipeline infrastructure than any community in Ontario, there is the potential to positively affect many farms and households in this initiative. That's in my area; I know many other communities with Ontario could benefit from this.

Secondly, I believe that the Connecting Links program, which provides funding for municipal roads that connect to provincial highways, also has a potential to benefit the community of Sarnia–Lambton. I'm hopeful—and I will work for this—that a way will be found for this program to improve our local infrastructure, including the long-overdue expansion of Highway 40, which connects Highway 402 to Sarnia. The expansion of Highway 40 has been long talked about by many governments, not just this government. With the increased traffic that we are seeing to Sarnia–Lambton's Chemical Valley and the further expansion of residential development in that area, it's time the province had a serious look at this project because of safety matters and others. Those are just two small initiatives that the government has put forward in this budget.

I would be remiss if I also didn't mention some of the issues with this budget that constituents in my riding of Sarnia–Lambton are concerned about. One of those, in particular, was the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. You will recall that the opposition—our party—had five budget asks of this government prior to the release of the 2015 budget. One of those was that they walk away entirely from their plans to mandate another payroll tax in the ORPP. Of course, in the budget the government recommitments to establishing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan by January 1, 2017. This triggered many emails to my office.

I'd like to read one from a local constituent, Ted Vanos, who is a very successful financial planner in Sarnia and has helped many individuals to achieve their financial goals. Mr. Vanos writes—this is from his email:

"Dear Mr. Bailey,

"I can't believe that Ms. Wynne and her associates are seriously going to go ahead with this Ontario pension plan. No one I know or speak to is in favour of it."



With the Ontario debt now ballooning to over \$280 billion with an annual budget deficit—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I regret to inform the member that eight hours of debate on the budget motion has now been reached. Pursuant to standing order 58, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sousa has moved, seconded by Ms. Wynne, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some nos.

All of those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I would like to inform the House that I've received from the chief government whip a deferral notice asking that this vote be deferred until the time of deferred votes tomorrow.

*Vote deferred.*

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and,

That the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to meet on Monday, May 25, 2015, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 6:

—notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—the deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on Monday, May 25, 2015; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on Tuesday, May 26, 2015; and

That the committee be authorized to meet on Monday, June 1, 2015, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill;

On Monday, June 1, 2015, at 4 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the Committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period, pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Tuesday, June 2, 2015. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on General Government, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The votes on second and third reading may be deferred, pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Dispense? Dispense.

The chair of cabinet.

1550

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** First of all, I may say that the enabling legislation for this particular motion was legislation passed in 1993 by the NDP government with, then, Dave Cooke, a Windsor member, being the member who brought in the rule changes which permitted some of the machinations that take place in the House today, and by the previous government under Premier Michael Harris, who brought in changes to the rules of the Legislature which enabled motions of this kind to be made—just so we know who the authors of these changes happened to be that enable motions of this kind which are so enthusiastically supported by the member for Leeds—Grenville and others on the opposite side.

Building infrastructure—modern infrastructure, in particular—is part of our government's plan to continue growing the economy and creating jobs. That is why

we're investing, in fact, over \$130 billion in public infrastructure over the next 10 years. These investments build much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province and will support over 110,000 jobs annually. Experts agree that investing in infrastructure is an investment in our economy.

An April 2013 report from the Conference Board of Canada found that each dollar invested in public infrastructure in Ontario raises gross domestic product by \$1.14 in the near term; in other words, that much for every investment that's taking place. So that's really good news. In addition, our own studies show that the returns on this dollar grow to \$3.1 in the long term while supporting jobs and facilitating private investment. That's something that, of course, we want to encourage.

Bill 6, if passed by the Legislature, would require our government and future governments to regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans. This will ensure that all governments recognize the importance of long-term planning. The Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act is part of our plan to continue building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. The proposed legislation would increase the opportunities for apprenticeships in a wide variety of trades. All parties have stated in the Legislature that they will be supporting this bill during second reading. So there we have it: We have the support of all the parties in the Legislature, and I'm delighted to see that is happening.

For instance, the member for Chatham-Kent-Essex stated in the Legislature that the PCs will "support the bill at second reading." The member for London West stated again during debate that the NDP will "support" Bill 6 during "the second reading process." With all-party support for second reading, it is time we move forward with Bill 6.

In the last Parliament, this Legislature—I think many objective observers observed—was ground to a halt and essentially unable to move forward. Only 39% of government bills were passed in the last, minority Parliament. That's compared to more than three quarters of bills that were passed going back to 1990. Voters of Ontario sent a clear message last June. They wanted our government to get on with the business of governing in their best interests.

Speaker, as you know, we introduced this bill in July. This bill has been before the House for over 10 months now. In fact, this proposed act is substantively similar to Bill 141, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, which was introduced on—get this—November 26, 2013. Prior to the dissolution of the 40th Parliament, debate on Bill 141 at second reading had concluded and it was referred to committee. There had been considerable debate on this bill and the ideas in this bill, and we have heard a wide range of viewpoints, opinions and perspectives.

I think most fair-minded people would conclude that we should end second reading and refer the bill now to committee. Committee stakeholders will present their views, and committee members will have an opportunity

to move amendments to the bill. At the same time, this House can move to substantive debate on other matters.

There are a number of important pieces of legislation that have already been introduced on which the government would like to proceed with debate in this House and move forward through the legislative process. Let me mention some of them: Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act; Bill 37, Invasive Species Act—I'll resist what I was going to say in that regard; I was thinking of last weekend when I thought of invasive species, but I'm going to avoid that because I don't want anybody to be crestfallen by my mentioning that—Bill 52, Protection of Public Participation Act; Bill 66, Great Lakes Protection Act; Bill 85, Strengthening and Improving Government Act.

We would like to spend time debating some of the other important pieces of legislation currently before the House, but of course it's difficult to do so until Bill 6 is dealt with.

Now, here's my expectation: My expectation is that there will be negative speeches from the opposition about this. I'm told that when some people who are now on the government side were on the opposition side, they made speeches of this kind. Of course, you would realize, having been here since 1990, Mr. Speaker, that there was good reason in those days for those speeches. Today, I could not conclude the same thing. So I expect there will be some partisan barbs that may be directed across the floor. I accept the fact that there will be those partisan barbs and representations made.

There are times in this Legislature when we can avoid that, when we can rise to the occasion and be non-partisan. We had one of those this morning, where we had the Premier of the province of Quebec—and they have many of the same pieces of legislation before them. The Premier of the province of Quebec addressed this assembly, and the three party leaders had an opportunity to offer their remarks and could have been very statesmanlike. I'm thinking at the present time that probably the member for Whitby-Oshawa would be the kind of member who would have given a very statesmanlike presentation to the House, and that did not happen with the new leader of the official opposition and the leader of the third party. But I want to get away from that, because I see you leaning forward, which tells me that it would only generate some unnecessary confrontation with the opposition.

So what I want to do right now, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, is to urge all members of this House to support this motion and help pass this bill as soon as possible, particularly in light of the fact that all of the parties represented in this Legislature are in favour of the bill. I look forward to the opposition parties, if they see fit, supporting this particular motion. I am always optimistic. That may or may not happen, but I'm always optimistic. It would send a good message, I think, if the opposition were to say to this Legislature, "You know something? There are occasions when we think bills should proceed to committee, and this is one of them."



So I look forward with anticipation to the debate which will ensue in the next two or three minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm going to speak on the government's closure motion on Bill 6.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** It's a time allocation, not a closure.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Well, it is time allocation, so we're choking off debate, to use a term that you used in the Legislature, honourable sir. I'll be quoting you more extensively in a few moments.

First of all, I want to thank the government for allowing the unanimous consent motion that allowed the new leader of my party, Mr. Patrick Brown, to speak today in the Legislature. It was a historic day. He spoke extremely well. I think he really showed the excitement that we have in our party with the election of our new leader. Again, I want to thank the government for allowing him, by unanimous consent—and the third party as well—a chance to speak to the Premier of Quebec's address today. So, again, thank you for doing that.

1600

I want to speak again, as I did earlier today, about this government's—really, they don't even come and talk to the third party House leader and me about bills like this anymore. I remember this bill being brought up in a very early House leaders' meeting in July; as the member for St. Catharines notes, it was tabled in the House for first reading on July 7. We didn't hear much about it at House leaders after that—I think it was grouped in with a number of bills—but this government can't seem to get its priorities straight.

The member from St. Catharines mentioned the minority Parliament. This government had a terrible problem: They couldn't seem to get any legislation through. They had a real problem managing the minority. They brought up bills, and it just seemed that they were more intent on getting these bills to the point where they could time-allocate them or, in some cases, invoke closure.

Here's a bill, for all the rhetoric on the other side, that we've debated now—we've only really had three of our members speak to this incarnation of this bill, Bill 6. It has really only been debated for just a little over six and a half hours, so there was ample opportunity, I think, for the government to work with the opposition parties on a bill that we do support, to get it through and get it moved forward.

But, you know, there's not even any offer when it comes to Bill 6 anymore. There's not even any recommendation on how we can collaboratively move the bill forward. It's just, again, that there's a time allocation motion tabled, and the government thinks that four hours of public hearings at second reading is adequate—four hours, with five minutes for each deputant and nine minutes to respond.

So here, Bill 6, their major infrastructure bill, which back in July they told our party and the third party is a priority for them—the priority is to hear less than 10

people appear before them as deputations. Ten Ontarians can come and give feedback on this bill. That's it, that's all: one day of hearings—four hours—and one day of clause-by-clause.

This was a bill that the government told us, when they got elected, was a priority, yet it went from July 7 to December 9 before it was ever brought back on the floor. You yourself, Speaker, as our critic, didn't actually finish your response until March of this year, after the bill was tabled.

The member from St. Catharines may talk about the bill being on the order paper or on the table for 10 months. Well, the bill was only called five times for second reading debate. As I've said, we've only had three of our members speak on the record on this bill. Again, the government says one thing and does something completely different.

The deputy House leader for the government says we're going to be partisan. I'm going to quote him. I'm going to quote the member for St. Catharines—the esteemed member for St. Catharines. This is what he said on December 11, 2001. This is Mr. Bradley: “This is indeed an interesting bill, but what's even more interesting right now is the time allocation motion that faces us. For the people who are watching this perhaps on their television sets at home, I should clarify that. That is the choking off of debate, the ending of debate or the government allocating how much time there shall be for the debate on a piece of legislation.”

There's the famous quote from Jim Bradley, the member for St. Catharines, about choking off debate. So here he is talking about time allocation, and he's the one who is presenting the motion. If he wants to talk about being partisan, here are his own words, right back at him, about being partisan. This was a bill that ultimately chokes off debate.

I can use his remarks that day, again, almost right back at him. Here's later on in that speech from December 11, 2011: “We are operating in this Legislative Assembly at this time almost exclusively on what are called time allocation motions. That's most unfortunate, because it's what you would call anti-democratic.” That's what he said then. He went on to say, “Today the strongest person is the party whip. The party whip simply tells the members of the committee what shall happen, and it happens. That's unfortunate, because on all sides I think members”—

**Interjection:** The government whip is running away.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Yes. There he goes.

“That's unfortunate because on all sides I think members have something to contribute: the opposition to concede when the government has made moves that are acceptable and good, and the government members to find problems that might exist in government legislation. But that is virtually gone. It is virtually dictated now by the Premier's office. The speeches we hear in the House tend to be speeches which seem to originate from the government caucus service bureau, and I understand the need for some research for speeches, but they are virtual-

ly meaningless, because they can't influence the government or the procedures that take place. That's most unfortunate."

I wholeheartedly agree with the member for St. Catharines. I wholeheartedly agree with him in that speech from 2001 about choking off debate. I believe that this bill, which has support from all three parties, could have been part of a discussion by House leaders. It could have been something we could agree with and move forward on.

We have lots of bills on the order paper from both of our parties; good bills that should be moved forward, good pieces of public policy. Just like we did a few weeks ago when we had three bills move forward, one from each party, this bill could have been part of such an agreement. This bill could have been brought forward to committee and piloted back to the House, but again, it's just the heavy-handedness of this government, the fact that they will just simply move a motion, shut down debate, or to use the words, "choking off" debate, as the member for St. Catharines has said. I've only had three members speak to this bill. I have members sitting in the House today right behind me who are ready, willing and able to debate this bill. We get absolutely no opportunity. I think that's wrong.

We're going to vote against this time allocation motion, and I hope that the government backbenchers will put down those talking points from the government caucus bureau and allow their constituents to have a say in committee and allow other MPPs to have their say in this House.

Thank you for giving me this chance. I am voting against this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, here we are again. The government is bringing forward a time allocation motion, just as they did earlier, on the privatization of Hydro. It seems to me that there is nothing to be lost by talking to the people of the province about public policy. Where is it wrong, where do we lose anything, if a government says, "I have a major initiative, policy-wise, that I want to put forward, such as the privatizing of hydro"—where is the downfall, where is the problem with giving the public the opportunity to have their say?

I think what is really galling, as we listen to the debate and the time allocation debates—as we heard earlier on the budget bill and we're hearing now—is that because the government says, "We've had six and a half hours of debate in the Legislature and we're going to let the bill go to committee for one or two days here in Toronto," that, somehow or other, makes everything okay.

I could understand if a government ran on something and said, "If we're elected government we're going to do X," and people voted on that, being a major campaign issue. I guess I wouldn't like it, but in the end it would have to do with the government actually trying to do what it said it was going to do in an election, and the people would have had their say. I wouldn't like it, but I

would understand it. I still wouldn't agree, but at least I'd understand the reasoning.

In this case, the government did not run on hydro—they didn't run on the privatization of electricity—they ran, essentially, against Tim Hudak and 100,000 jobs, is what they did, and they tried to present themselves as people ready to lead Ontario with progressive ideas. Nobody would have thought that being progressive meant you were going to sell off or privatize Hydro. My God, nobody would ever have got that idea from that kind of debate. But this government, now that it's in power, is acting as if they're Conservatives in a hurry. At this point, they're outflanking the Conservatives when it comes to how right wing you can be and how much privatization you can have.

**1610**

The auditor reported that we wasted over \$8.5 billion of taxpayers' money on—what do they call them? Public-private—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Partnerships.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** —partnerships. I don't like using "P3s" because maybe people out there don't know what it means. But the government, instead of doing infrastructure, as we normally did, which is, a municipality does a debenture and the province pays for it up front, or finds economies within their own ministries or borrows money to do it—what this government is doing is they're making all these deals with the private sector and having them build our hospitals, bridges and other things, not just doing the physical construction work, which they always did—that was always the case—but they're getting them to run the jobs and to essentially own the buildings in the end. The auditor has come back and said it's \$8.5 billion more to do that. Here this government argues it's got to sell Hydro in order to raise what is \$4 billion that will go—I will argue it won't even go to transit, but go to general revenue. They would save \$8.5 billion if they wouldn't do all these public-private partnerships—P3s, as they're known—on infrastructure.

I just say to the government across the way, you never ran on this. Now, to come in and say, "Oh, we're having more hearings than we've ever had before"—the Premier was a bit confused today. She talked about six days of hearings. Well, it's not six days of hearings, it's four, because two of those six days are clause-by-clause, where only members sit in the room and are able to speak at committee. The public can watch—there's nothing wrong with the public coming to look—but it's the members amending the bill, so there's really only four days of hearings.

What happens if you live in communities across the province? If you live in northern, southwestern, south-eastern or central Ontario and you have a want to be able to come to speak to this whole issue, the government is not giving people the ability to have their say, and they didn't run on this in the last election.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** We had more days—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, exactly.



I would just say that the government doesn't want to hear from the public because their own polling numbers tell them what it is. This is not popular with the public.

The Premier was in Sudbury on Friday at the FONOM meeting, where the municipal leaders from across northern Ontario gathered. The Premier herself, in an answer to questions from the floor—in other words, municipal politicians from the north—said, “I understand this is not popular and I understand we're going to take some political hits,” she said to the municipal leaders. Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario, understands this is not popular with the public. She's able to admit to politicians in northern Ontario that what she is doing is going to give her a political hit and it's not popular and she didn't run on it in the last election—all the more reason why you should give the public the opportunity to have their say.

That brings me to the time allocation. I just want to finish on that, because I know other members of my caucus want to speak.

The other part of this whole thing is this concept that, somehow or other, allowing the public to come to have their say is a terrible way of doing business because it's not efficient for the passage of the legislation.

Listen, when I got elected in this place, there was no such thing as time allocation. Essentially, this place worked as a minority government, because any opposition party, as Mike Harris did to us when we were in government, could hold the government up for days on end in order to force the government into negotiating hearings or into doing whatever. Governments had to respond. If they wanted to get their legislative agenda through the House, they would have to accommodate. The quid pro quo was that an opposition party, such as Mike Harris's of the day, would stand in the House and read the names of every lake as an introduction of a bill. That would hold up the House, because back then, there was no time limit on how long you could introduce bills, and the government, in this case the Bob Rae NDP government, had to sit back and say, “You know what? All right. How do we get our budget through the House?” So we made a deal where there would be public hearings in the intercession having to do with matters within the budget so that people could have their say, but the essential parts of the budget were passed. That was the compromise.

What's wrong with the government doing a similar thing now? If they feel so strongly that the privatization of Hydro One is a great deal, maybe they're going to learn things from their friends the bankers and their friends the people who want to invest in Hydro One when they go on the road, and they may have some things to say on the record that quite frankly would make a very bad deal at least a little bit better.

But no, the government doesn't even want to do that because it's in this mindset that six and a half hours of debate is just enough, and one or two days of hearings at Queen's Park without giving the public the chance to have their say is more than enough. You know, “Those

darned voters, those citizens of Ontario, those pesky people, let's just move on with our business at hand.”

This is the danger of what happens when a government relies too much on time allocation. I just think the government would be wise—and I know my good friend the member from St. Catharines, or wherever it is, his riding, Mr. Bradley—I don't know the riding. Sorry.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** St. Catharines.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** St. Catharines. He's one who understands because he's been in this Legislature beyond all of our years in this Legislature. He served in minority Parliaments and served in the House before time allocation was introduced and the rules were changed. He's correct: It was my good friend Dave Cooke who changed those rules. At the time, I thought—being a newbie, I did what every newbie does in government and applauded what goes on from the backbench as a trained seal, to a certain extent. But I finally understood, after a few years in this place, that actually that was not a good idea. I did it myself. I'm not accusing you of anything I haven't done myself.

I just say that the government would be well served to allow the public to have their say because, at the end, who are we? We are the servants of the people we represent, and when we give them voice to have their say, I think that strengthens democracy to whatever side of the argument you come from. I would ask the government to reconsider and find ways in its dealings so that we actually have more time to allow the public to have their say when it comes to the very important pieces of public policy we deal with in this House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member for Wellington–Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I want to thank you for assuming the chair so that I'd have the opportunity to speak to this particular time allocation motion on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, the official opposition in this House.

As you know, this is a time allocation motion, and I think we use jargon around here that sometimes isn't well understood, so I'm going to attempt to explain what that means. The government, in its wisdom, has determined that six hours and 40 minutes of debate on this particular bill, Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, is enough debate. They're sick and tired of hearing from the opposition on this issue and they've decided that it's time to send this bill to committee, and put strict parameters on how long the bill will be discussed and debated in committee. Again, they're ending the debate in this House so that other members of the Legislature who may very well wish to speak to this bill and offer their thoughts, ideas, suggestions, their participation on behalf of their constituents—that is being taken away, unfortunately, if indeed the House passes this time allocation motion.

Again, it's my understanding that this has been debated for six hours and 40 minutes, that there have been what we call 20 principal speakers on this particular bill. Of course, there are 107 members in this House, Mr.

Speaker; I don't need to remind you of that. Thirteen of those speakers were government members, and all of those speeches of course were in favour of the bill, but I would point out that in most rounds of the debate the government members shared their time. So in each round there were up to three to four government members speaking for only two or three minutes at a time, in some cases. It's my understanding there were 11 opposition member who had the opportunity to speak, but I think our House leader said three from our side of the House. The fact is, there hasn't been very much debate on this particular bill.

We have seen in recent months the government becoming increasingly impatient with the debating of legislation in this House and having, in a number of cases, brought in closure motions, actually, forcing the Speaker to make a determination as to whether or not sufficient debate has taken place. You, Mr. Speaker, have been faced with that choice, as have I. Of course, we have a responsibility to the House, working with the table staff, recognizing precedents as well as other considerations that are parliamentary tradition, but at the same time, it has meant that in some cases debate has concluded.

This is the other mechanism that the government has to curtail debate, choke off debate, as has been said by our House leader, and that is the time allocation motion. Of course, if this time allocation motion is passed, Bill 6, the infrastructure legislation, will be sent to the Standing Committee on General Government. It would be given the opportunity, that standing committee, to have public hearings for one day only, May 25. There would be some publication of the fact that these hearings were taking place. There would be literally one afternoon of hearings. There would be a deadline for the filing of amendments that is fairly tight as well. Then there would be clause-by-clause the following week, June 1, right through till 9:30 p.m., if necessary, to deal with the clause-by-clause determination of the bill. Then the bill would be referred back to the House and, if necessary, all the amendments would be deemed to have been moved, even if they hadn't been moved. So it's a fairly, I would say, harsh schedule that has been set aside if indeed this time allocation motion passes.

1620

We've discussed this, of course, and we've had some fun with quotes that were read into this House going back a number of years. Many of us have been privileged to serve in the Legislature on both sides of the House, and I think that those of us who have served in government as well as opposition understand that, from time to time, governments will bring in time allocation motions or closure motions. But I think it's a sad day when we see this being used as a routine measure in terms of management of the House's business.

We would expect and anticipate that the House leaders, in their weekly meeting, would have a chance to have some give and take as to which bills and which motions are going to be called for debate—that there would be true negotiation, not just a government House

leader sent into that meeting with orders from the Premier's office, but that there would, in fact, be some give and take so as to ensure that the opposition's concerns, which of course emanate from our ridings and the people we represent, could be taken into consideration too in terms of the discussion of the government's business. But what we see in many cases now, I think, is the corner office making the final decisions, the government House leader being sent into those meetings with really no opportunity to consider what the opposition has to say, and then we're given the details of what's going to be debated the following week in the House, and that's it.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in a perfect world—which is what we should be aspiring to, in my opinion—there would be discussion and give and take at that House leaders' meeting, the opposition would have an opportunity to express some of its views, and some of those views would be taken into consideration. But we apparently don't have that.

Getting back to Bill 6, I have said in my second reading speech—I had an opportunity to speak at length on this bill, and I was glad to have that opportunity—that our caucus would support the bill at second reading. Yet we will not support this time allocation motion, because it curtails debate—in other words, chokes off debate—and does not give many of our members who would wish to have an opportunity to speak on the infrastructure issues in their riding, I assume, and to offer constructive suggestions and advice on a bill that we intend to support at second reading—those members will not be given that opportunity. We have 27 members in our caucus, Mr. Speaker, as you know, and if only three of them have been given an opportunity to speak, how is that fair? How is that a situation whereby members have been given adequate opportunity to participate?

We're all here on behalf of our constituents, all of us having been re-elected not even a year ago in the election of June 2014. Surely the government should recognize and understand that members of the Legislature would want to have a chance to participate in debate, to talk about the infrastructure issues in their riding, and to try to make constructive suggestions, as I said, in second reading debate.

We would hope that the committee process will provide for that, but even the committee process is curtailed by the time allocation motion, which suggests that there are strict parameters around when it will conclude.

Mr. Speaker, we see a government that is becoming increasingly overwhelming in the application of its authority in this Legislature, putting the boots to the opposition from time to time with these time allocation motions. It is quite distressing and unfortunate.

During the course of this debate, we have talked a bit about what took place earlier today. I was very pleased to have had the opportunity to meet the Premier of Quebec, the Honourable Philippe Couillard, who was here and gave his presentation. I thought it was interesting to hear from each of the party leaders, to hear their response to his speech. I thought, in every case, that the welcome that was extended to the Premier was gracious.



I want to compliment our new leader, Patrick Brown, on his presentation. I thought what he was trying to do was to emphasize the areas of solidarity that he feels as a newly elected leader of the Ontario PC Party. The fact is, he complimented the Premier of Quebec for many of the policies that they are pursuing. Of course, the government members showed, I think, their displeasure. I thought that was unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, because certainly when we heard our Premier, Premier Wynne, in her response, she did the very same thing. She talked about the areas of solidarity that she felt with the Premier of Quebec. That's exactly what she did. So I wondered how it was that the Liberal members were so upset with what our new leader did.

But the fact is, we had an interesting morning, and it was wonderful to have a guest in this Legislature and to have all three leaders welcome the Premier of Quebec. It was an interesting day, certainly, and something that I'll always remember as a member of the Legislature. I don't think there's been another example where we've invited a guest to speak on the floor of the Legislature going back 25 years—probably going back to the time Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa was here to address the Legislature, which was actually, I think, in the late 1980s. So, again, it was an interesting opportunity for all of us to hear from that particular distinguished guest.

Getting back to the bill that we are considering here, in effect, with this time allocation motion: The bill requires the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to develop a long-term infrastructure plan, which must set out a description of government-owned infrastructure assets, a description of anticipated infrastructure assets for at least the next 10 years and a strategy to meet those needs. Each plan must be made public. If the bill comes into force after consideration by the Legislature, the government would have up to three years to table its first report. The plan would be at least 10 years in scope and would be tabled in the Legislature no later than five years after the day the previous report was tabled.

The government, if Bill 6 is passed, would have to consider a list of criteria when prioritizing proposed projects for the construction of infrastructure assets: Infrastructure planning and investment would take a long-term view and would take into account the needs of Ontarians; infrastructure planning and investment would take into account any applicable budgets or fiscal plans; infrastructure priorities would be clearly identified; infrastructure planning and investment would ensure continued provision of core public services; and infrastructure decisions would promote economic productivity, competitiveness, job creation and training opportunities.

If Bill 6 is passed, the government must require that architects and persons with demonstrable skills in infrastructure design be involved in the construction design of infrastructure assets. The government must require that certain numbers of apprentices be employed or engaged in the construction or maintenance of infrastructure

assets. The Lieutenant Governor in Council would add services covered under infrastructure or remove physical structures or facilities from the definition.

The purpose of the bill is to encourage long-term, evidence-based infrastructure planning and support job creation and training opportunities, economic growth and environmental protection. That is what the government would have us to believe.

We see, in the most recent provincial budget—which was tabled in the Legislature not that long ago—some interesting numbers. I think that it's important to continue to talk about the fiscal context upon which this time allocation motion has been presented this afternoon and, indeed, the fiscal context upon which the bill is ultimately going to be considered. So we see a deficit this year projected in the provincial budget that was tabled a few days ago; a deficit of \$8.5 billion. It is down somewhat from last year's deficit. Again, when I say \$8.5 billion, we're talking about this fiscal year, 2015-16, which actually started April 1, just over a month and a half ago, or thereabouts. An \$8.5-billion projected deficit: That is the shortfall that the government expects in terms of a comparison between its income or its revenue and its expenses.

Again, last year, the fiscal year ending at the end of March 2015, the deficit, the government told us, was \$10.9 billion. So the deficit, in fact—I have to acknowledge—is coming down modestly. It's down from what they had projected the deficit would be last year, which was actually \$12.5 billion, if you'll recall. So the deficit is coming down modestly but not as fast as we would have expected. I think that most Ontarians, having heard the government's repeated promise to balance the budget by 2017-18, would expect to see a greater acceleration of the reduction of the deficit if we're going to achieve that particular target the government has talked about repeatedly, over and over again, and has committed itself to.

We, alarmingly, see a considerable increase, again, in the net debt of the province. The projected net debt this fiscal year, the number that is included in the budget, is \$298.9 billion; rounded off, it's \$299 billion. That is up \$14.7 billion from last year. Last year, the projected deficit was \$284.2 billion.

1630

That's a lot of numbers, but the bottom line is that we're creeping up very close to a \$300-billion net debt. In fact, year over year, the debt has gone up \$14.7 billion. The government would have us believe that they're doing a wonderful job of controlling and constraining government spending, and in fact, the debt is going up \$14.7 billion this year. That is taken from the government's own budget papers, *Building Ontario Up*. That's the number that they themselves have presented in the budget process, and it was presented to the House with the budget speech.

We see that provincial government spending continues to go up as well. This year, they project to spend \$131.9 billion—rounded off, \$132 billion. That is up from \$129.5 billion last year, an increase of almost \$2.5

billion. Again, the government would have us believe that they're taking these great steps and in fact have made great progress in controlling government spending, but we see that the spending continues to go up this year, going up by \$2.4 billion more than last year.

Another important indicator of the severity of the debt on the provincial taxpayers: The net debt per capita, which again is the amount that each of us owes as Ontarians—every man, woman and child—has gone up again this year. It's now standing at \$21,642. Every man, woman and child in the province of Ontario, in effect, owes \$21,642 because of years and years and years of provincial government overspending and an inability on the part of the government to show fiscal discipline and live within its means. That number, again, is up \$870 from last year. Last year, it was \$20,772. So in fact, the indebtedness of individual Ontarians continues to grow.

Another very important illustration of the level of debt in the province of Ontario is the debt-to-GDP ratio. What we do with that number is we compare the total amount of the provincial debt in relation to the size of the economy, the gross domestic product, the value of all of the goods and services that we in Ontario produce, the economic value of all that taken together. That gives you a number, which allows you to compare our debt to the total value of the goods and services we produce, and shows the ability, really, of the province to service that debt. Right now, the debt-to-GDP ratio coming out of the Building Ontario Up budget papers shows that that ratio is up to 39.8%, up from 39.4% last year.

Just to compare, before the recession in 2007, 2008 and 2009—that time frame—the debt-to-GDP ratio was 26.2%. So the fact is, the debt-to-GDP ratio has increased dramatically, and the government really has no answer to that other than a vague commitment to reduce it at some point in the future. But it's something that should concern every one of us who cares about the future generations in the province of Ontario, our children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the government, in its budgetary planning and processing, seems to have discounted and dismissed the interests of the future generations of the province of Ontario. They seem to be totally unwilling to live within their means and to exert the kind of fiscal discipline that is necessary to ensure that our children and grandchildren will inherit a province that we can be proud of. Instead, we're leaving a legacy of debt.

Another important number that is in this budget document is the interest payments on the debt. We know that the interest now is the third-largest line item in the provincial budget in terms of the expenditures; health comes first, education comes second, and now third is interest costs. This year, they're budgeting to spend \$11.4 billion on interest, up from \$10.7 billion last year. Again, this is the fastest-growing line item in the budget. It is expected to continue to grow an average of 5.7% in the foreseeable future, going out to 2017-18. We know that with every increase in interest rates, the government is expecting to have to spend an additional \$400 million.

This is a serious concern for the people of Ontario. As the government continues to overspend and deficit-finance and add to the debt, we see a growing debt, we also see growing interest costs to service that debt and we see no end. So that is really the situation that we're facing as a province today as a result of now a dozen years of Liberal overspending in particular, where they have more than doubled the debt since they took office.

Again, I know there's a great deal of concern about that in our communities, but it appears that people need to be more informed about the financial problems that the province faces with respect to its finances. We continue to point these out in the Legislature, and have an obligation to do so. But at the same time, we know that the government plans to spend \$130 billion on infrastructure over 10 years. That seems like a large number, and it is, but I also would point out that the government plans to spend on infrastructure this year \$13 billion, I believe. So even though it seems like a huge number—\$130 billion over 10 years—the government is trying to, with that presentation of the numbers in that way, suggest that they're doing a lot, that they're going to be spending a great deal, when in fact, what they've done is take the fact that they're spending \$13.5 billion this year—scheduled to spend—and then extrapolated it over 10 years. So they're not even planning to spend, over a 10-year period, the same amount that they're spending this year. I think that has to be put into perspective.

I would also say that, yes, the government intends to spend massive amounts on infrastructure. I am here as the member for Wellington-Halton Hills representing my constituents and I would remind the government and the members opposite that we have infrastructure needs in our ridings, too. Given the fact that they're going to spend the money anyway, I'm certainly prepared to advocate on behalf of my constituents for the infrastructure projects that we need.

I look at the Highway 6 Morriston bypass: This is something that I have advocated for for quite a number of years now. I'm starting to get impatient because I think there is an awareness on the part of the government side—a number of the government members are well aware—that this project needs to be moved forward. When I raised this in the House, in the special summer sitting of the Legislature after the provincial election, I was pleased that, the very next day, the Premier acknowledged in her response to one of the questions from our side of the House—and I'm paraphrasing her somewhat, but she more or less said that she thought it was a priority, too, and should be acted upon.

As a former Minister of Transportation, she herself must know how important this project is.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** And there's another former Minister of Transportation here in this House. I would ask all of them to exert some influence on their colleague the current minister to ensure that this project is in fact added to the five-year plan.

What I am asking for is eminently reasonable, in my view. The government has a five-year plan for new high-



way construction which they call the southern highways program. Each year, after the provincial budget is tabled in this House and passed by the House, the Minister of Transportation has an opportunity to review and revisit the projects that are on the five-year plan. Obviously, the ones that are completed will be checked off. That creates room for new projects, and I continue to suggest and submit that we need this project on the five-year plan.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity on Saturday to speak to the current Minister of Transportation, at an event that we both attended which was held in Toronto. I again impressed upon him the need for this particular project. I invited him, again, to visit our riding to announce it. Actually, in the last week I sent a letter to him, an email, on behalf of the township of Puslinch and on behalf of the Morriston Bypass Coalition, which is a large group representing employers, chambers of commerce, area municipalities, and, Mr. Speaker, you'll be pleased to know, well represented by Hamilton companies as well as the city of Hamilton, if I'm not mistaken, as well as the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

This came together after a request by a former Minister of Transportation, actually Bob Chiarelli, who met with the mayor of Puslinch a while ago and urged him to put together a coalition like this to speak up. So we did exactly what the minister requested. I know that the group has had trouble getting into to see the current minister, but I've asked the minister to meet with them. He, in fact, indicated to me last week that he would agree to such a meeting, and I hope that we can put together something very quickly. But the Morriston Bypass Coalition includes the township of Puslinch, the county of Wellington, the cities of Guelph and Hamilton, as I said; both the Guelph and Hamilton chambers of commerce, as well as prominent businesses such as Tim Hortons, Maple Leaf Foods, Nestlé Waters, Sleeman Breweries, Canada Bread and Cargill. It's also true that the township of Puslinch commissioned an economic study carried out by Dr. Clarence Woudsma of the University of Waterloo, which concluded that the traffic jams in Morriston are costing tens of millions of dollars a year. The government has that economic study, and again, we look to the government to respond in the appropriate way.

**1640**

First of all, what the government needs to do is have the minister meet with the Morriston Bypass Coalition and the township of Puslinch—I would want to be there, too, to represent my constituents—and then we would invite him to come to our riding and announce that the project is being put on the five-year plan of the ministry for new highway construction: the southern highways program. I leave that with the minister.

We also need a new courthouse in Halton. The existing courthouse was built more than 50 years ago. It's no longer adequate to meet the needs of one of the province's fastest-growing regions. The existing facility is aged, overcrowded and inadequate in terms of security and privacy. We have heard from judges and from other

courthouse users, as well as lawyers and staff. I've had a chance to tour the existing court facilities and I know that shortly after that tour took place, some of the other government members who represent Halton were able to tour it as well. The member for Burlington, the member for Halton and the member for Oakville, on a separate date, had a chance to tour the court facilities, and we are trying to work together in a non-partisan fashion to bring that issue forward to the government to consider it. We've been assured that we are a high priority. I've raised it in the House with the Attorney General, had a number of conversations with her, that when new funding becomes available for new courthouses we are, supposedly, led to believe that we are a high priority. Again, I submit to the government that we need a new courthouse in Halton and we have needs that need to be addressed.

On a number of occasions, I have called upon the government to approve a new Holy Cross Catholic school in the community of Georgetown. This was brought to my attention by Mark Rowe a while ago, who is a trustee with the Catholic board in Halton, and we worked together to try to bring this forward as a concern.

This particular school, the existing Holy Cross Catholic school, was built in the late 1950s. I have seen it—I visited it on a number of occasions at the invitation of the board. The school is in a deteriorating condition, and a recent facility condition survey indicated that the building will require over \$5 million in repairs over the next eight years to maintain it in an acceptable condition. They're going to have to spend \$5 million if they don't build a new school. This is one reason that I brought it to the attention, before the election, of the Minister of Education, and at that time it was the Halton Catholic board's number one priority for new school construction. We were disappointed not to receive the approval of the ministry to move forward, but we continue to highlight the need.

I have also, on a number of occasions, raised the need for improved GO train service to my riding and, actually, in December 2008—it's hard to believe it was that long ago—I tabled a private member's resolution calling upon the government to extend GO train service to include stops in Acton, Kitchener and Waterloo by September 2011. I used that date, September 2011, which was three years after, to give the government time to proceed, but we also knew that the government's mandate was going to be concluding and the House was going to be dissolved in September 2011, so I knew I was going to be here at least until that time. We encourage the government to proceed.

There was a new service that was finally operational in January 2012, a few months after my requested date, including a stop in Acton, which has been well received in that community, and certainly we appreciate the government's investment in improved GO train service to my riding.

We were also very interested in the government's promise and commitment in the most recent provincial

election campaign to extend two-way, all-day GO service between Waterloo region and the GTA, which motivated me, when the House resumed sitting in the summer of last year, to table, on the very first day it was possible to do so, a private member's resolution which called upon the government to keep that commitment. I think it is a service that continues to be well appreciated by its users, and I know we need to continue to improve transit services in the province of Ontario. Certainly in my riding, because of its proximity to the GTA, increasingly we have a large number of commuters who are trying to get to Toronto on a daily basis and need to ensure that they can do so in a safe manner.

I'm looking for my private member's resolution—I believe it's the second one on the order paper. It was tabled on the very first day it was possible to table a resolution, July 3 of last year, asking that "the Minister of Transportation should immediately move forward to fulfill the government's commitment to provide full-day, two-way GO Transit train service on the Kitchener line between Waterloo region and the GTA, with stops in Wellington—Halton Hills."

Of course, we have seen the government making statements about more express trains between Kitchener-Waterloo and Toronto. We'd like to see those trains stopping in Wellington—Halton Hills, to ensure that our constituents can actually access that service as well.

I will also call attention again to the need for provincial government assistance to help the town of Erin with their waste water management system. The town has been working for years on a service and settlement master plan, which they call the SSMP. The town of Erin is perhaps the largest southern Ontario community without a waste water management system for the community, impacting the town's ability to attract commercial and industrial investment, and forcing ratepayers to pay increasingly higher taxes. The town cannot afford to build the new waste water treatment facility without the support of the provincial government.

The town of Erin has a population of approximately 11,000, and approximately 4,500 people live in the hamlet of Hillsburgh and the former village of Erin. According to published reports, the potential capital cost to provide sewage treatment and sanitary services for both communities of Erin and Hillsburgh is estimated to be as much as \$58 million, with annual operation costs of \$900,000. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely cost-prohibitive for a community that small, and we need the provincial government to support that.

I would conclude, again, with the appreciation that has been brought forward on the part of some of our municipalities for the government's decision to reinstate the Connecting Link Program, something that we on this side of the House called for, and we express our appreciation. But I would add my question: whether this is new money or just a reallocation of existing money, and whether or not the government is going to ensure, as in some previous years, that up to \$25 million is available through the Connecting Link fund for the communities that are along connecting links routes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It is indeed an honour to stand in the House this afternoon. It's not an honour to talk about—what is it?—foreclosure, no. What's it called?

**Interjection:** Time allocation.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Time allocation. You're foreclosing on my time to speak.

Speaker, the government is looking for ways to create jobs and prosperity. I say, come to Windsor, reopen the slots at the harness track at Windsor Raceway—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** And Niagara.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** —and Niagara and Fort Erie. You've got 3,000 jobs in Windsor that you killed with that stupid bill to get rid of the slots at Windsor Raceway. Even if you don't bring back the slots, let us have our own harness track. I don't care if you call it Caesar's harness track or not. We have so many people down there fighting to get those jobs back.

The little track in Leamington—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** A great track.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Well, it's a little track—great people. Minister, I'll say there are great people working at that Leamington track, but it's a little track and they need more help. In the back stretch, they need more barns, more paddock. They need some satellite feeds to get some off-track betting in there. It's a not-for-profit. The people in Lakeshore say, "Hey, work with us on this. We'll build a new track in either Lakeshore or the town of Tecumseh, and we'll reinvigorate harness racing in southwestern Ontario." When the people in southwestern Ontario come to Leamington on those, what, 10 or 12 dates year—our betting handle is better than the other small tracks across the province, because people in Windsor and Essex county really support their harness racing industry.

I told you before, Minister, that the reason I'm a New Democrat is because the Liberals killed the slots at the harness raceway in Windsor. That's what got me interested in running provincially. That got me interested in joining a political party for the first time in my life and becoming a New Democrat, and I'm so proud of that, to be somebody who comes here and stands up for the people in Windsor and Essex county on a daily basis and says, "You made a mistake. There's no harm in admitting that you made a mistake. Just reverse it."

**1650**

Don Drummond led you down the garden path on that one. He said that you were subsidizing the tracks. You weren't subsidizing the tracks. You were not allowed to even put a slot machine there unless the harness people said, "Yes, come on in. But when you come in, you're going to augment the pool. You're going to augment the size of the handle that the drivers can win."

Anyway, you killed it; they're gone. And it's not just there. There are thousands and thousands of jobs lost—Sudbury—across the province because of a very stupid decision by a former government.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Is that unparliamentary, to call people stupid?



**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Well, I didn't say that the people were stupid; I said that the decision was stupid.

If you want to create some more jobs, listen. I'll give you another way to create more jobs and develop prosperity in Ontario. It's very simple: work. Work with Unifor. Work with the automotive industry—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down, please. I'll tell you what is—I won't use the word he did—aggravating. It's when people are yelling at each other and not going through me.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** It's amusing for you to say that, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, well. Thank you, Dr. Killjoy.

Continue.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you for that intervention, Speaker; they really needed it.

Seriously, folks: You want to create jobs? Work with us. Work with the automotive industry. Work more. Come up with an automotive strategy. Come up with a manufacturing strategy. Work with the federal government, if you can convince them. I know it's a tough job; someone's got to do it. You're in power. We need an automotive strategy in this province. We need a manufacturing strategy in this province. We cannot continue to lose all of our jobs. They're all going to Mexico.

We had an opportunity in Windsor, not that long ago with the Ford plant, to get together and build a new engine. That would have created thousands of jobs. I know that a couple of women in my riding went out and started their own petition to try to convince the Liberal government to get back in the game and try to get that Ford plant re-energized with an engine for the future. That didn't happen. The government of the day wasn't ready. This government wasn't ready at that time. I think that would have created thousands more good-paying jobs, good union jobs, that would have created a better economy for the entire province.

We're talking jobs and prosperity; let's talk infrastructure for a while. I know that if you want to get serious about some joint funding of infrastructure projects, you'll find a long list of possibilities in Windsor and Essex county. The member for Essex was up the other day talking about Bruce Crozier's Way. Some of you remember Bruce, the tomato king, a good friend of mine. I loved the guy. I know his daughter works for one of you. Bruce Crozier was a heck of a politician, a good Liberal, a good Deputy Speaker.

I bought a couple of bow ties the other day. I said, "I want to look like Bruce Crozier and Glen Murray." I still haven't figured out how to tie them.

Bruce Crozier was the tomato king, as Robert Fisher used to refer to him on CBC Radio. After he passed away, just a day or two after he said he wasn't going to run again, the Liberals—God bless you—named this stretch of the highway down our way in Essex county Bruce Crozier's Way or the Bruce Crozier highway.

You were going to expand it and double the lanes out on Highway 3, and that hasn't been done. It was

announced with good intentions, and it's been out there. A little bit of work was done one year and a little bit of work the next year, but there is a lot of work yet to be done on this. We're really hoping that under the jobs and prosperity plan, some money will be found to keep Bruce's memory alive. I wish you success with that. You'll have full support from the NDP when you decide to do that.

Earlier, the member from St. Catharines was talking about fair-minded people, what fair-minded people would do, if they would say, "Okay, you've talked about this long enough; let's send it off to committee." I say fair-minded people would also, given an opportunity, like to be able to speak on a lot of things across the province, be it the proposed budget bill or anything else. You just might find, when you go talking to people about the budget, that people would give you ideas on how to stimulate the economy, how to create jobs, how to build prosperity back in Ontario. But you're not going to do that, unfortunately. You don't want to listen to fair-minded people. That is unfortunate. My leader said today to the Premier of Quebec, "Ontario is yours to discover." Why not go out and discover and give our various communities the opportunity to speak to your budget bill and see what people have to say to that?

We've also heard a lot this afternoon, Speaker, about choking off debate with time allocation. It's what you want to do on your budget bill as well: You want to choke off debate. I see a bit of hypocrisy going back there.

But go on tour. Get the band back together. Get out there. Take it on the road and see what kind of ideas you can get. There's nothing quite like a road trip to see what's going on, and get ideas on jobs and prosperity.

I know down our way, we're trying to build a hospital. Former Minister Duncan said, "Yes, we should have a new hospital." He put former Minister Piruzza on a committee with Dave Cooke from the NDP, whom Minister Bradley was speaking about earlier today, and a former PC, Tom Porter, who was on city council for a long time—ran federally and lost to Howard McCurdy, but that's old history.

We had this committee looking at a new hospital, and the first plan was, we had to combine the existing hospitals somehow. That happened. Nobody thought the two hospital boards would ever get together, but they have. So the acute care hospital is being run by the Windsor Regional people, and the Hotel Dieu people are now doing more of the long-term care and rehab. That's working wonderfully, Speaker. There's a process to follow, and they've asked us to sit back and watch the process unfold, and that's what we're doing.

They have had a site selection committee. My favourite site was at the Windsor airport, but it didn't happen. They don't want the new hospital at the Windsor airport. But what's going to happen sometime over the summer is, the site selection committee is going to say, "This is the spot that we think this new hospital would go on."

After you get the site, then you come back to the government for the next phase. You say, "We've done all of

our homework. We've chosen the site. Now we need the money for the design stage." That is the next step in the process.

After that, of course, if you design it, we would hope you would build it, but even after you have the design, you have to get permission to go ahead and build.

Just letting you know: We're still on the record. The Premier has promised us she's not going to forget about Windsor and Essex county. I know she has said that in other parts of the province as well. That is something that will create jobs and prosperity down our way. If you're building a new hospital, that's a lot of money, a lot of construction jobs going on.

The Herb Gray Parkway is about to open this summer. I'm hoping the minister will invite us all down to that opening. I remember being on city council when we first started talking about this. The government was proposing, what, five or 10 lanes in each direction just of flat highway? We fought like heck to get some overpasses and underpasses and some parkland. We hired the world's expert, Gridlock Sam Schwartz, the man who coined the phrase "gridlock," a former traffic commissioner of New York City. He came down and gave us a plan. We worked with him on a plan. We eventually, after much arm-twisting, convinced the provincial government that indeed this was a good plan. This was the gateway to Canada if you were coming in from Michigan, or this was the last thing you would remember of Canada if you were leaving to go to Michigan, the Herb Gray Parkway—named after a good friend of mine, Herb Gray. I know members opposite know him well. I covered his campaigns from the 1970s and the 1980s and the 1990s. Speaker, I told you before that I worked as a reporter with the CBC for 30 years in Windsor. On my last day on the job at CBC Windsor, my phone rings and it's Herb Gray. That's the type of man Herb Gray was. He called me up, and he wanted to wish me well. He said, "I hear you might be going on to a political career"—of course, that was municipal—and he wished me well.

1700

I'm sure he would be very pleased that I'm standing here today. He might not be overjoyed that I'm on this side of the House, but he would wish me well, because that's the type of man Herb Gray was.

I look forward to the day, be it as a former city councillor and as a current MPP, when I get the invitation to attend the official opening of the Herb Gray Parkway. It's a wonderful job. It was the biggest highway construction project—not the longest stretch of road, by any stretch of the imagination, but the most expensive highway project in many, many years, if not ever, for one piece of highway in Ontario.

I don't want to stand up here and take everybody's time today, but I just wanted to say that time allocation—I know you have the ability to use it. Cutting off debate: It's in the rules that we work within; you can do that. Is that the best way to get the best ideas? I'm not so sure about that. But you do what you think you have to do. On

this side of the House, we will do what we think we have to do, and that's to give you ideas, and we hope you listen. We hope you're listening, we hope you're taking notes and we hope you'll say, "Yes. You know, he did mention a couple of ways to create jobs in Ontario."

Speaker, at this point, I'll sit down, because I know other members of my caucus are ready to jump up and give you some more good ideas this afternoon. Thank you for your time this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It was interesting earlier, to listen to the Minister without Portfolio. He has been here the longest, I think, out of anybody in this Legislature—unless Mr. Monte—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** No, I don't think Monte has been here the longest.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** No? So he has. He has this institutional memory, and he said that Cooke, under the NDP, first started this process around early discussions around time allocation, and then, of course, Mr. Harris finished the job. So Cooke and Harris cooked up these mechanisms to manipulate debate, to limit debate.

But that doesn't make it right. It doesn't make it right in this context. It certainly doesn't make it right, especially within the facade of this open and transparent new culture that we're dealing with, where, actually, debate has been shut down extensively and the back-and-forth between the government and the opposition parties, I think, has to be at its lowest form. The shift from that minority government to the majority government was a bumpy transition, and, certainly, there is not this feeling, I think, that all of us in this House can contribute to legislation.

The time-allocated piece of legislation is Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015. I had the pleasure of standing up and sharing our concerns on this piece of legislation last year. We're right to share our concerns. That is the right thing for us to be doing. Actually, that is our job.

We were right on a lot of things. If you look at the record with this particular government, we've been right on a number of issues. We were right to raise the concerns on eHealth, for instance. We were right to raise the concerns on the Ornge air ambulance scandal. We were right to pursue the gas plant scandal, which had a price tag of \$1.1 billion when the government originally said it was only going to cost \$40 million. We were right to push this government and to expose what happened in Sudbury. When the elections officer says that there has been an apparent contravention of the Election Act, that's something that we care about. The people who we represent, they care about that as well. We were right to raise the concerns around the privatization of road maintenance, for instance.

So when you time-allocate and you limit the debate, you're shutting down the opportunities for the opposition members, quite honestly, to do our job, and I think the people in our respective ridings don't appreciate that very much.



All of this happens within the context of so many little public consultations. There was an article in the paper this weekend—there are currently 18 public consultations or expert advisory panels. It's like this government does not even remember how to make a decision, period. Yet, when it comes to this House, we're going to have only four days on the budget. People have serious concerns around the budget. It's true, there will be four days of consultation and then two days of clause-by-clause, but by the time you get to clause-by-clause—we've seen this movie. We know how it ends. If the committee structures, as they have existed in this majority setting, are any indicator of how successful we're going to be, I think we know how that movie is going to end.

The very fact that this is all happening around the sell-off of Hydro One—I was in my riding, of course, this weekend, and I have to tell you, the lady at the Twice is Nice store wagged her finger at this government. She said that they did not have a mandate: "They did not ask me if I wanted Hydro One sold." They see it for what it is. They see it, quite honestly, as a very misguided move.

You can avoid making mistakes when you truly do consult and not just go through the motions, like the Ed Clark panel, for instance—the free, pro bono work that Mr. Clark did for the Premier that only cost us \$7 million. That definitely is not free or pro bono. There isn't anything pro bono about a \$7-million price tag.

On Hydro One, I want to connect it to infrastructure for jobs and prosperity, because, obviously, the economy is reliant on strategic infrastructure investment. On the Hydro One issue, I have to say that I'm just trying to understand how the government can possibly extract cash from an over-mortgaged Hydro One without assuming more debt, all the while paradoxically claiming no other choice but to sell Hydro One since the government can't assume more debt. Following an asset sale, according to Bill 91, the government must pay the OEFC, the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., the sale proceeds in one of three forms. This is in the budget. They must pay either (1) by cash, (2) by loan forgiveness or some set-off, or (3) an IOU. The OEFC doesn't owe the province any money, as far as we can tell. On the contrary, the province already owes the OEFC billions from previous IOUs, and the province wants to keep \$4 billion in cash, ostensibly to pay for transit, so that really just leaves new debt. In other words, in order to avoid new debt to pay for transit, the government says it must sell Hydro One, which requires the government to assume new debt.

This is the kind of logic you need to consult on. You need to take these numbers out to the real people in the province of Ontario.

Even though you gave Mr. Clark a mandate; you said, "Make the argument for us to sell Hydro One"—I remember that very distinctly because we were in the lock-up, in a very dim room, to receive the banker's report. I thought it was foreshadowing, personally, in my own mind, to be in a dark room listening to how we're going to sell Hydro One and—

**Interjection:** Turn the lights on.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The lights were on, but, really, nobody was home.

It defies logic. The government swaps \$4 billion in new public debt for \$4 billion in old hydro debt, and the only thing that really changes is that a profitable Hydro One winds up in private hands. This is the kind of logic which is ruling the day here at Queen's Park. It makes no sense whatsoever.

We should be talking about how to strengthen infrastructure for jobs and prosperity, but it's impossible not to focus on how many times this government has already gone wrong on infrastructure. This government says that it's committed to \$130 billion worth of investment in transit over the next 10 years, and yet, two and a half weeks ago the government deferred the Sheppard East LRT project, which has been formally funded since 2009. The minister said there wasn't enough capacity—crews or workers—available to handle the two LRT construction jobs at once. If \$250-million-per-year's worth of long-planned LRT construction can no longer be accommodated at the same time as another long-planned LRT project that will cost \$300 million per year over four years, then how does the government expect to accelerate transportation infrastructure construction in this province by over \$3 billion every year for 10 years above existing plans? For the next year, it doesn't.

1710

For us, it's the Groundhog Day story on the GO train service in Kitchener-Waterloo. I mean, we're currently doing the timeline, and we're documenting every time a Premier or a minister or a candidate said "five years," "electrified," "15 minutes," "high-speed rail," "bullet trains." We have it on the record.

But more importantly, though, Mr. Speaker, is the people of Kitchener-Waterloo, who have made a compelling business case for that investment. I have to get up at 10 after 4 in the morning and drive into town. I know you do that very early drive as well. What's crazy is that it's getting busier and busier.

It's not trucks; it's people just trying to get to work, which is ultimately a productivity issue. It's a productivity issue; it's an environmental issue; it's an investment issue.

Really, for us to be talking about Bill 6 and infrastructure—actually, to be talking about how we're not allowed to talk about it anymore—is that it is really about priorities, and it really is about choices on infrastructure for jobs and prosperity.

I can't help but think that back in 2010, when, obviously—the Premier says each and every day that she has no choice but to sell Hydro One in order to raise \$4 billion for transit. We should remember, though, that in 2010, when she was transportation minister, she chose to cut \$4 billion from transit so her government could give corporations a tax break that cost the provincial treasury \$2.5 billion every year, an amount that could completely fund the Big Move with enough left over to restore provincial funding for transit operations. So it's rewriting history in some respects, every time the Premier gets up and talks about this.

But time-allocating the debate on this piece of legislation really does limit the ability for us to hold you to account. I see that they don't like it. I mean, it's uncomfortable, especially when we have the evidence right in front of us—the dates, the times, the places, the quotes, the words, the public record. For them to time-allocate this, it contributes even more to the cynical politics which has become the new culture here, compliments of the Liberal Party of Ontario.

I know that my colleague would like to comment. It has been a pleasure to voice my concern on behalf of the people of Kitchener–Waterloo about the time allocation motion with this piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I think I've got a couple of minutes left. What I'm concerned about here is, I understand that infrastructure has to be addressed. We have to move ahead with repairing bridges, roads and things. I understand those things, but what I don't understand is how we got here.

The bottom line is this. I don't have to go through the list of scandals, but I will anyways: Ornge, gas plants, eHealth, MaRS—it goes on and on. But the total amount of money is billions of dollars. If you did a forensic audit of every ministry in this government, I could come up with hundreds of millions more money that could be put towards infrastructure. We could have had billions of dollars, and we wouldn't have had to touch Hydro. It's my understanding that even when they touch Hydro, it's going to be less than 3% of the total budget for doing all these repairs and investments.

Why would you take one of your biggest money-makers—even when they were considering the Liquor Control Board and they were considering Ontario gaming and lottery—these are the money-makers for our government. These are the money-makers that put dollars in our pocket so we can do these projects. If you put all this in the private sector, we won't have the income to do anything, and the next thing that will be going up for sale will be this building.

The bottom line is, you can't give away your assets. You can't give away the jewels from the crown. If you do, you're going to end up with a tainted crown. So if this government can come together—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Even my colleagues over there are interrupting me. Okay.

If you can put all these things in abeyance for now until you go through an audit, until you go through all the losses and savings that we could bring forward—which would be billions of dollars that were wasted before—then, possibly, we wouldn't have to be selling our biggest asset, which is Hydro.

I think we're going at this too quickly. They call it a fire sale; I would call it putting the cart before the horse. There are so many other things we could look at to save money in this government, and we don't. What we do is jump. What we do is jump into a knee-jerk reaction. It's

not good because, at the end of the day, we're going to end up paying through the nose, our kids are going to pay through the nose, and so are our grandchildren.

The bottom line is this: Why would you go ahead quickly with something when you haven't looked in your own backyard to clean up the mess and the waste before you go pursue something and give away something that's probably the backbone of this province? It's a sad day in Ontario when they sell Hydro.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always a privilege to speak in this House, though today I do so reluctantly. It's on a time allocation motion regarding Bill 6. The thing about time allocation that really bothers us and bothers me is not the fact that we get to talk less in this House; it's the fact that people in the majority of the province get to have less input.

This bill has got something about apprentices, that you have to have apprentices in government contracts.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** And we need that.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm not saying I'm against that, but we need to have a full discussion.

I'll give you an example. Someone in my riding, Barret Leudke from Temagami Electrical Services, has two journeymen and two apprentices. One apprentice is almost a journeyman, so he could get another apprentice, and he's got two. In Temagami, they don't come along every day. He called the Ministry of Labour, called the Ontario College of Trades to see if they could work something out. And no; the answer is no. Their suggestion was, "Perhaps you could hire one for five weeks and the other one for five weeks." Barret should have had the chance to come talk about whether he's going to be able to bid on contracts because he might not have enough apprentices, and he might not be able to bid because of that.

That's why time allocation is bad. Not only do you time-allocate people here—we talk for a living—but you also stop people who actually have life experience of something that we could fix from presenting to a committee. That's why we are going to vote against this motion. That's why we believe that committees, especially on big bills like the budget, should travel the province at length: because people have experiences. We all are here from life experience, but other people have had life experiences which we haven't had and we need to know about.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 22. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell unless I receive a deferral notice.



I wish to inform the House that I have received a deferral notice from the chief government whip asking that the vote be deferred until tomorrow at the time of deferred votes.

*Vote deferred.*

1720

## ENDING COAL FOR CLEANER AIR ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ABANDON DU CHARBON POUR UN AIR PLUS PROPRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities / *Projet de loi 9, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement pour exiger la cessation de l'utilisation du charbon pour produire de l'électricité dans les installations de production.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** When we last debated this bill, the member for Parkdale–High Park presented her thoughts. Now we go to questions and comments with respect to the presentation in the House by the member for Parkdale–High Park.

I'm pleased to recognize the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I do recall hearing about half of what I thought was quite an articulate speech from the member from Parkdale–High Park. Just having had the opportunity to lead a trade mission to China, along with my colleague the Honourable Michael Chan, you could certainly see over there the challenges that they have in terms of how, for many, many decades, they have principally generated their electricity from coal, and what it's done to their environment, but more importantly, what it's done to soil conditions in mainland China. Everywhere you go, the Chinese leadership will be very frank in admitting this fact: that many, many decades of generating electricity from coal has created a lot of heavy metals indeed in their soils.

One of the things that they want from the province of Ontario is to acquire more and more of our freshly grown and processed food, because they recognize that Ontario has branding second to none when it comes to food quality, and they want to take advantage of a great strength we have in this area.

Give credit where credit is due: I don't mind Prime Minister Harper when he's around with all those signs, "Canada's Economic Action Plan." If there was an outhouse anywhere in Ontario, I think they would put another one of those signs up, "Canada's Economic Action Plan."

The fact of the matter is that China is looking at our technology here in Ontario, where we can clean up the air. The member spent some time talking about that. It was a very good speech.

We in this House want to do everything we can to improve air quality, and Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, 2015, is a great way to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure to provide a few minutes of questions and comments on the speech from the member for Parkdale–High Park. I wasn't here in the House for her speech, but I took the opportunity during debate on the time allocation motion to read the speech.

I have to say, I was very impressed. I was certainly a lot more impressed with your speech that I read than the speech I just heard from the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, because I certainly appreciate the hard work of Prime Minister Harper and his government, and I don't begrudge the government for their work on infrastructure. I actually applaud the work of members of his government. In fact, I know my own MP, Gord Brown, has been extremely hard-working in our riding over his term, and I know he's been a champion for eastern Ontario and projects in our community.

The member for Parkdale–High Park opened up her speech on this bill in, I think, a very classy way. She applauded the deputy House leader for the government, the member for St. Catharines. She also applauded you, Speaker, in your capacity as MPP for Wellington–Halton Hills. She appreciated the institutional knowledge that both of you brought to debate on this bill earlier that day in the session. And I have to compliment her on her mention of Elizabeth Witmer in her role as a minister closing down, or beginning the process to close down, the coal plants.

I do appreciate that she used the words "after-the-fact bill," which I thought was a pretty good tone. I also remembered that she was elected in 2006, so she got to hear the government's promise in 2007, 2011 and 2014 on this issue. So I thought the speech was great.

The only thing I disagreed with you on was the NoJetsTO. I think it would be a good plan. You were against it. We can agree to disagree on that point.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I, too, was not here for the member from Parkdale–High Park's speech, but apparently it was quite informed. I also would like to compliment the member from St. Catharines. He has always been a champion for fighting pollution, and that's a good thing. I commend the government when they're moving ahead with anti-pollution legislation.

But speaking from a personal perspective, I spent 32 years in a steel mill and I know the results of tar pitch volatiles. I worked on what are called coke oven batteries in the mechanical department. In those days, when I first started, we didn't even have masks. I would say that 70% of the people I worked with are dead from various types of cancer—lung cancer, any cancer; you name it, they got it. There were tar pitch volatiles; there was naphthalene; there was cyanide. I think I've breathed every known carcinogen. Asbestos: We used to knock asbestos off

pipes to weld them. We didn't know. We'd be covered in white powder, and that was the stuff you could see and not the microscopic stuff that can kill you. One of those fibres can kill you.

So I saw many, many people pass away in the steel industry from exposure to coal and coke dust, and also by-products—light oil. That's another nightmare you can get leukemia from. So there are lots of people that have died from workplace hazards, and that's why legislation has to continue in that direction to protect workers, because I've seen hundreds and hundreds pass away, especially in my community.

So anything that fights things that are polluting our air and our water—there are so many people getting cancer now that they say that 50 years from now, one in four Canadians will have some type of cancer. That's pretty scary stuff. So I would encourage the federal government in the Kyoto, which they did not follow. I would encourage them to continue to look at what they are doing to their own country, whether it be the tar sands or anything else. It's not good, and they've got to do something about it to protect Canadians, to protect our grandchildren and protect our kids.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It gives me pleasure to speak also to the member for Parkdale–High Park and add some questions and comments to her remarks. The member is known as a great defender of environmental programs. I admire that about her, the tenacious way that she does want to protect air and protect people's health. In Parkdale–High Park, as in Beaches–East York, that's an extraordinarily important consideration.

I know that in her heart of hearts she agreed with the government in closing the coal plants. She often speaks, as she did during her remarks, about the distrust that she has for the private sector running power. Like the member beside her from Toronto–Danforth, she tends to say no a lot to new innovation and doesn't trust the private sector. To some extent, we may be actually aligned on this issue, because what this particular bill seeks to do is to ensure that the private sector and the public sector don't have an opportunity to come forward and create power using coal. So I know in her heart she agrees and supports that.

As a result of us closing those coal plants, as she would know, Ontario's new power generation is 99.7% greenhouse-gas-free. That's an extraordinary accomplishment when you think about it, and understand that we're still going after that last 0.3%, right? Because this is without a doubt the single most successful climate change initiative in North America.

So that's why I'm very supportive of what we're trying to do in this act, because it does protect these initiatives as we go into the future. We said no to coal and we said no to clean coal. But as a result of this initiative that we've done by closing the coal-fired plants, we are now creating new, clean, biomass opportunities at some of those plants. As the member for Toronto–

Danforth repeatedly went after the generation of gas in the community that I live in by saying no to gas power, what we have to recognize is the other side of the equation. When you close coal, you have to find ways of generating, and there's no better generation system than having distributed generation, which shares loads across the province.

I appreciate your work on this, your support on this bill.

1730

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That's all the time we have for questions and comments in this round. I return to the member for Parkdale–High Park for her reply.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Thank you to everyone who weighed in on this debate. It's interesting: A bill is supposed to announce what a government is going to do. This is a new kind of bill. It's a bill that announces something that has already been done, which kind of begs the question whether it's really a bill or simply an announcement or, hey, a photo op—but whatever. As we heard, they promised in 2003 to close the coal-burning plants, then in 2007, then in 2011. Finally, we got it done in 2014, and that's a good thing.

To the member from Beaches–East York: I would simply bring his and others' attention to Gord Miller. We should give him a round of applause, because he's retiring. He has done phenomenal work as our Environmental Commissioner. That work has been deeply critical of the government's attempts around greenhouse gas emissions. Time after time, he said that they have failed to meet their targets. That was Gord Miller.

In fact, today we heard about the cap-and-trade. We would love, in the New Democratic Party, to see the cap-and-trade proposals of this government. We have yet to see them. Again, it's an announcement of something to come, but it's not here yet. And we have an announcement of something that has passed, but yet another announcement. They're very, very good at announcements.

Meanwhile, here's what's happening. Meanwhile, we are burying nuclear waste beside Lake Huron. Meanwhile, we are potentially flying jets in TO without environmental assessments. This is what's going on. Meanwhile, on your hydro bill, the cost overruns of investing in nuclear—billions into nuclear—are still ongoing. As we see, with the waste being buried by Lake Huron, we don't know what to do with the waste.

So I would caution the government: Yes, closing coal-fired plants was a good thing. Let's get on with the rest of it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**M. Shafiq Qaadri:** J'ai le plaisir de parler au sujet du projet de loi 9, un grand plaisir aujourd'hui, particulièrement en célébrant la présence et le discours de l'honorable Philippe Couillard, premier ministre du Québec. Aussi, je veux déclarer tout d'abord que je veux partager le temps pour mon discours avec le ministre des Transports et mes collègues les députés de Northumberland–Quinte West et de Scarborough–Agincourt.



Speaker, with your permission, I would like, first of all, at the outset, to speak directly in support of this bill, but perhaps from a slightly different perspective. While my colleagues have spoken about the parliamentary side, about some of the administrative side—we've heard the honourable member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek talk about some of his own experiences as a steel mill worker for 30 years plus, and some of the direct pollution that he was exposed to—I want to salute, honour, remember, codify, stratify and enshrine the fact that this particular bill is the largest single reduction of greenhouse gases in the history of North America.

I say to you earnestly that as a physician, as someone who has helped—whether it's adults or kids, patients and their families—overcome varying levels of respiratory disease, whether it's early-onset asthma or end-stage chronic obstructive lung disease, and to see the pollution effects first-hand, I want to tell you that this is an extraordinary legacy piece on behalf of the Premier of the province of Ontario, to whom I am the parliamentary assistant.

Speaker, I want to speak, for example, if you'll indulge me, a little bit on the medical side. Asthma, as you know, is a Greek word which means difficulty breathing—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Speaker, I have the endorsement of the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I feel quite pleased.

We have as well the other condition, as we call it, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, COPD. These are fancy doctor words. Basically, it means that the lungs have been trashed, whether it is from chronic smoking—usually, by the way, it's a mixture—or whether it's the excess pollution, for example, or whether it's car exhaust. As my colleague cited earlier, there's a whole segment now of occupational asthma or occupationally induced COPD.

We must do our part, as the stewards of the environment and, of course, of the economy in general, to lessen this particular burden.

For example, three million Canadians, as we speak, have asthma. It is responsible, unfortunately, for some 500-plus deaths annually. There is something on the order of two million unscheduled urgent care visits that occur because of asthma.

We've heard about climate change and extreme weather. Of course, that's happening on a large geographic basis. But if we do not purify our air or take steps to clean up the environment—again, it's the air or the water—we affect our own bodily local environments. That's what's happening. That's why we have an explosion of things like childhood asthma, occupational asthma, adult asthma, hospital emergency room visits, things like premature deaths, increased hospital admissions, and so on.

Mention has been made—I guess provocation has been issued from the members opposite: Why are we officially speaking about this yet again? It's already been

accomplished. Well, this took a lot of political will to do, to actually close down coal-fired electricity generation. As the Chair of the justice policy committee who sat through those hearings, I know first-hand the political will that was expended. It wasn't such an easy accomplishment; it was something that required a lot of alignment.

Having said that, when we're attempting to codify this, to enshrine this, to make it essentially an irreversible loss of Atikokan, Nanticoke, Lambton, Thunder Bay, these, Speaker, are the types of initiatives that I think will be spoken of in a praiseworthy manner on a historical basis.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, as I am almost always saying at the outset of adding my voice to discussion here in this chamber, it is my pleasure to rise to talk a little bit about Bill 9 in my capacity as the MPP for the community of Vaughan. It's also a real pleasure to follow my colleague, the member from Etobicoke North, who, as he mentions—and I know it's well known here in this chamber—serves as a medical doctor. He's someone who spoke very eloquently, as he always does, both in English and in French, about the importance of this bill.

It's interesting, Speaker, because before I heard my colleague speak this afternoon, I had given some thought to what I might say with respect to this bill, but after listening to him speak, I've actually decided to take a slightly different approach. He mentioned, of course, what we all know with respect to this decision the Ontario Liberal government made with respect to stopping or ending the use of coal.

It's interesting, what my colleague from Etobicoke North mentioned, as it relates to COPD and it relates to the incidence of childhood asthmas and the dramatic reduction we've seen in Ontario in terms of smog days. It actually got me thinking a little bit about my own grandmother, my mom's mom, who passed away a few years ago, someone with whom I was very close.

For the last year or two of her life, she was suffering from COPD. She wasn't a smoker; my grandfather had been a smoker many years before. I think the combination of second-hand smoke in their household and also, likely, although not necessarily confirmed, a number of environmental external factors contributed to the final stage of her life in which she was afflicted with COPD. Having had the chance to witness that as her grandson—again, someone I was very close to—it was very difficult to witness and watch the health challenge that she had to face in her early and mid-80s grappling with COPD. So when I heard my colleague talk about the positive impact that our decision to stop using coal had from a medical perspective, it did certainly put me in mind of my own grandmother.

Also, as the father of two very young kids, a seven-year-old and a four-year-old—two girls—it does make me very proud to be part of a government that took this action, that made this decision and now, with this bill,

seeks to enshrine this decision so that we can continue to go forward and generate electricity without using coal. It makes me very proud to be part of this government because that helps me believe, helps me understand, that as my daughters grow up in this beautiful, wonderful province, the likelihood of them and their friends in the schoolyard and on our street and others of the same cohort suffering from childhood asthma and other related respiratory challenges as a result specifically of what they're breathing in the air is dramatically reduced.

I think this government deserves a great deal of credit for having shown that leadership many years ago, decisively taken that action and helped produce that result.

1740

I can remember working here in this building as a staff person to other members of provincial Parliament, including my own predecessor from Vaughan, Greg Sorbara. I can remember a time when here in the province of Ontario, in the course of a summer season, we were consistently having to confront a number of smog days. When you look at the numbers now and you look at the incidence of childhood asthma here in this province, you do see a fairly dramatic improvement. Of course, as with all other things that we deal with, it doesn't mean that the work is over; it doesn't mean that the work is complete. But the decision to enshrine this bold move on the part of our government here in this bill, Bill 9, is something that is extremely important and very much deserving of support from members.

I've heard from others on both sides, from the NDP caucus and the Conservative caucus, talking about, "Well, it's backward-looking," talking about the fact that perhaps it took a little bit longer to deal with this particular matter than was originally anticipated. Both of those concerns or suggestions may be true to an extent, but of course that doesn't eliminate the fundamental fact, which is that this was a globally leading decision. I think the member from Etobicoke North or someone else on our side of the House did mention earlier today that this is perhaps the single largest greenhouse gas emission move or manoeuvre or tactic that has ever been undertaken, not just by a sub-national jurisdiction, but by perhaps any jurisdiction around the world over the last number of years.

Bill 9 is something that, for all of the very personal reasons that I've articulated here this afternoon, for all of the economic reasons, for the environmental reasons, for the social reasons, is very much deserving of support. So I sincerely hope that the members of the Conservative caucus and the members of the NDP caucus, as I always hope, will move away from taking the opportunity to engage in excessive partisanship on this particular matter, will support Bill 9, and will help us go forward and support our efforts to make sure that we do continue to live in a coal-free jurisdiction.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Northumberland—Quinte West.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It's a pleasure to rise today in the House to talk about Bill 9 in the few minutes that are allotted to me.

Speaker, a lot of it is repetitive, frankly.

A couple of weeks ago, I was speaking on Bill 9, and in my two-minute response I talked about one of my grandkids and how today's society is much different than the time frame I grew up in or that my parents grew up in. We used to drive big, gasoline-guzzling boats. The miles per gallon didn't really mean anything. It was how much power they had and how fast they would go—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:**—full of leaded gas. But today, society expects more.

Speaker, it's worth repeating. You've heard me say many times that I have nine grandkids. One of them was about nine or 10 years old at the time, last fall. We went to the Belleville Bulls games, which we can't go to anymore because they moved to Hamilton. Here's what a nine-year-old would see when it comes to the environment. I think it's the only paper mill in southern Ontario, on the shores of Lake Ontario, in Trenton. There was a smokestack with white—he said to Grandpa, "What's that white smoke coming out of the chimney? It's bad for the environment." I know that this particular corporation had a steam reformer to help them generate energy to run their paper mill. I said, "A.J., it's not smoke. It's steam." I tried to explain the benefits. After reflecting a little bit, he said, "Grandpa, you can call it whatever you want to call it. It's coming out of the chimney, and it's going in the air. It's bad for the environment." Certainly, I didn't think of those things when I was nine or 10 years old, but in today's society, that's the way they are.

We've heard from both sides in the opposition, "Why are we doing this? We've done it already. It's finished. So why are we spending time dealing with this legislation?" Well, Speaker, I'll be honest with you. Certainly things went through my mind, but I'll tell you what changed my mind today. It just happened this morning. We had the honour and pleasure of hosting the Premier of Quebec this morning with a full House here. I'll tell you what worried me, and this is why we should do this as soon as we can—by the way, congratulations to Mr. Brown for being elected leader. From his speech this morning, he will try to lower energy prices at whatever cost. By passing this legislation, we'll make it a little bit tougher to go back to coal, because I've been convinced that he would go back to coal.

The question that they've asked all along is, "Why do we need to do this?" It's because of people like those on the other side who will revert to any action. The environment doesn't mean anything—absolutely nothing.

I think it's important that we pass this. We've come a long way. We've come a long way, and I think this will kind of finish the package up if anybody in the future wanted to bring coal. We know that coal, by every study that people tell us, is bad for the environment.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** It's terrible.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It's terrible—something that we've been breathing all along.

I would say, let's get this done. I know they're going to get pressure from their own constituents to support this bill, because it is very important to do.



You've heard this before, and it's worth repeating: Today, 99.7% of energy is produced with no greenhouse gases. We're not quite 100%, but we'll get to 100%. I'm confident. I must tell you, we've come a long way. Pretty well every jurisdiction, every profession, supported us when we eliminated coal. Now this is the final seal of approval.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise this afternoon in support of Bill 9, the Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said earlier about the economic costs—I'm just going to reiterate the piece—Ontario's coal-fired plants cost the people of Ontario an estimated \$4.4 billion per year in terms of health, environmental and financial impacts. So at the end of the day, it's not just about health, as my colleague from Etobicoke North said so eloquently. It is of significant financial cost to the entire system.

The other piece is, just recently, the Ministry of the Environment talked about how the early closure of the coal plants in Lambton and Nanticoke would save the province approximately \$95 million through the reduction of operating and maintenance costs. Again, there are financial costs with this continued use of coal.

The other piece is the proposed legislation, if passed, will mean that we will be amending the Environmental Protection Act, first listing the four coal plants that we would be closing—everybody knows we already closed Atikokan, Lambton, Nanticoke and Thunder Bay generating stations, after December 31, 2014. More importantly, we'll be sending a very strong signal in terms of maximum fines that the EPA will be levelling against anyone who breaches the legislation.

The government of Ontario is committed, when it comes to the health of all Ontarians, to ensuring that if anyone breaches the EPA, there will be maximum fines for corporations for specified offences of up to \$6 million. Again, at the end of the day, we want to send a message to those potential violators that there will be consequences if you breach Bill 9, if passed.

We also want to send a signal that we are committed, as a government, to ending the use of coal in stand-alone electricity generating facilities. As a government, we want to protect the entire province, making sure that we have clean, reliable and affordable power; that we as a government are investing in people, building on infrastructure and supporting a dynamic and innovative business climate that the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs talked about earlier.

1750

At the end of the day, the Ontario Lung Association spoke so eloquently: If you cannot breathe, nothing really matters, especially for those asthmatic patients, especially for those patients with chronic obstructive lung disease. We hear about those constituents on a regular basis, because we know coal is harmful to health. We also know we have a responsibility collectively in this

Legislature, and I believe the member from High Park spoke eloquently earlier about this particular legislation.

I'm very interested to hear the newly elected official PC leader's position on this particular piece, because if we have unanimous consent on this bill, we will move this bill to committee. Hopefully, we can get this passed before the House rises for the summer.

The other piece here is that as a former nurse, I can tell you that working with patients with chronic obstructive lung disease, as well as with cystic fibrosis—every day they depend on good government legislation, on legislation like this. I dealt with patients with chronic lung disease, where every day they are concerned about air quality; every day they need to check smog days; every day they need to make sure they have their puffer and their medications; every day they need to look at the environment before they can go out; and every day their quality of life is being affected by the legislation that we in this Legislature pass or don't pass.

I'm very, very pleased that the government of the day is taking leadership in bringing this bill forward. And the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change needs to be thanked for his leadership, because he brought this legislation forward last July.

I'm hoping that all three parties in the House make speedy passage of this bill, because this is what every Ontarian needs to have.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to have an opportunity to comment on the speeches by the various government members, led off by the member for Etobicoke North and the Minister of Transportation, on Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities.

I have to say that this bill, which is all of one page, seems to me to be a completely unnecessary bill that's all about optics. I can't say how many times I heard the government promise they were going to be shutting down coal-fired generation. I thought, maybe because I heard it so many times, that they had actually achieved that. Wasn't it in the 2003 election—maybe the government members can help me out. I believe it was going to be in 2007 that coal-fired generation was going to be shut down. Maybe the government members can correct me if I'm wrong. But then I think it was 2011—it was back a few years. But please tell me you've actually done it now. You've talked about it so much. Do you really need this one-page piece of legislation to accomplish your goals?

I would say to you that the bigger problem in the energy field is what you're doing to energy prices. I think we'll probably hear loud and clear this Wednesday, when there's going to be a significant protest on the lawns of Queen's Park—I'm sure hearing from my constituents who can't afford to pay their electricity bills because of all the various schemes you come up with, like the Green Energy Act, which is, again, as much about optics as it is about anything else.

The one thing the Green Energy Act has accomplished is dramatically higher prices. I would say to anyone interested, read the Auditor General's report from last December, in particular the smart meter section, where you'll learn about the global adjustment and how it's paying for above-market prices. So you have accomplished dramatically higher energy prices, including a recent 15% increase. We'll be hearing about that from constituents on the lawns of Queen's Park on Wednesday.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** From a health perspective, certainly this bill is a good thing. But the bill is what it is: It really is doing something that's already done or is already finished.

I can tell you, as a nurse having worked for many years on the front line, the prevalence of COPD, I think, has decreased and will continue to decrease with this kind of non-use of coal. There is no worse death. I worked in the intensive care unit for many years, and there is no worse death than someone struggling to get a breath of air into those lungs and knowing that there isn't anything that you can do for them. So it's a good thing.

I come from the Niagara region, where we had many, many manufacturing plants. I can still remember the days when the sheets were black when people hung their wash out on the line before the days of electric and gas dryers. The women in the house would have to take that laundry in and rewash it, and hang it out another day when the prevailing wind was going in the opposite direction.

So I have to agree with some of the comments here that, really, this is a photo op. It's an announcement that will get a photo op at first, second, third reading and at royal assent. But having said that, I guess the bigger piece is that it is good for the health of Ontarians, and I'll close saying that.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** On a point of order, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, I know it's appropriate to always correct your record. When I responded earlier today to the member for Parkdale-High Park, I talked about being in China, but I did forget that it was eight cities. Just for the historical record, we also visited Hong Kong at the same time to really look at the activity that's going on in Hong Kong towards improving air quality in Hong Kong.

I wanted to actually relate that. I wanted to make sure that the record was corrected. I know the orders of procedure allow me to correct my record. I just wanted to do that, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Yes, standing orders provide for that.

Point of order, the member for Beaches-East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** We'll be closing shortly, but I wanted, from our side of the House, to actually have an opportunity to formally recognize the new leader of the

official opposition. I met Mr. Brown in the hallway as he was coming through. I'll tell you, I was very impressed. Not only did he know instantly who I was—he has obviously done his research and his homework; I was very impressed by that. He's of course well known in hockey circuits; he's well known amongst all the hockey rinks in Ontario, and I'm looking forward to getting to know him better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Of course, I'm honoured to be able to take my two minutes and talk about the leadership that we're showing on this side of the House when it comes to enshrining this law to ensure that we're protecting our children, our youth and our future generations, because it's important to recognize, Mr. Speaker, through you, that it's our children that will be dealing with climate change for decades to come. Hopefully, this is one step that we can take to really help them, because it's our generation—most of us in this room right now—that will be the last generation to know what normal climate is all about, because we're seeing right now, right around the globe, changes to our climate.

What we're doing today is debating and talking about a bill that is going to enshrine that coal will no longer be used in Ontario, and we will start protecting the air that our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren will be breathing. So it's for our pages that we're doing this today, for our children and for everyone in Ontario that needs to breathe clean air.

I know we've all talked about our experiences growing up. I grew up in Sudbury. I remember—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Yes, and I know the honourable member from St. Catharines did as well.

I remember, and he will probably remember as well, breathing blue air. Sulphur in the air from the smelter—riding our bikes and tasting like a match just went off, and trying to figure out where that taste was coming from, who was lighting that cigarette or whatever it was. But to know now that we've seen changes in technology in the mining sector that that doesn't happen, and to know that this government is enshrining that coal will no longer be polluting our air—that's something that we're going to be doing to protect generations to come.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It was my pleasure to be able to stand and talk to this bill, and it truly is important for me to be able to get through and talk about the importance of climate change and addressing all of that that comes with it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I just want to point out to the people listening that it was actually Elizabeth Witmer from our party who made the first motion to shut down coal. We just heard the last speaker talk about how concerned he was about the children and youth and our pages. It took them over 10 years to actually do it, and now they're



bringing back a bill to say, "We won't do it anymore." It's unbelievable.

What people talk to me about, that they want to see as a priority in this House, is hydro rates. By the way, there is going to be a protest here on May 13. I hope every member of the government goes out and listens to the people who come to Queen's Park from all across this province to truly talk about hydro issues that matter today.

Community Living was here—concerns about beds available. They talked about services and programs. Are they bringing legislation forward on this, Mr. Speaker? I don't think so.

The closing of the RCU in Chesley, Ontario, that my colleague from Huron-Bruce and I spoke about today: They don't seem to want to talk about that in here.

People come into my office crying because they can't find enough mental health services, and we bring this type of legislation to waste our time.

Twenty-one per cent of youth in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound are unemployed. It's deplorable. It's the lost generation. And they don't bring that.

We just lost GM in Oshawa and Goodyear—a thousand jobs a pop. Are we talking about that in here? No, I don't think so.

They don't want to talk about the record debt.

The member talked about helping climate change for our youth. If we had that \$23,000 that they've burdened them with debt—think of what that could do for our environment and the positive we could do. Mr. Speaker, the debt that they put us under is burying us.

The things we should be talking about in here, how we find jobs for our youth—these pages need jobs.

The environment is not going to be here if these guys keep spending the way they are and overspending.

It's all a bunch of fluff, this bill. They should have been doing it 10 years ago. It's deplorable that they're actually bringing this forward and taking happiness out of "We brought this forward," when they didn't close them 10 years ago and they could have.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Northumberland—Quinte West can reply.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I'd like to thank the members for Parry Sound, Welland, Sudbury and Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

To the member from Welland, thank you very much. I think you talk from experience on the effects that dirty air and the environment have on all of us. Some of us, in lay terms, don't quite get it sometimes and we're a bit stubborn. So thank you for bringing your perspective and, obviously, your support.

I want to just comment on the comments from the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. If I've got this right, it's a waste of time talking about the effects on our environment; it's a waste of time to talk about the environment. That's what I heard this morning. That's what I heard again. I just don't get it. They don't care about our kids, our grandkids or our great-grandkids. It's all about them today.

Speaker, the other comment was, we should have done this 10 years ago. Well—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** They opposed it 10 years ago.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:**—you opposed it 10 years ago.

Speaker, they really need to find a road that they're going to go down, because right now they're all over the map. They're not sure, depending on the time of day, depending on the day of the week.

I look forward to them coming to their senses and supporting this legislation—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Well, I have my doubts.

But, Speaker, I really hope they see the light at the end of the tunnel—that we're going to keep lit up—and they'll vote on this bill.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1804.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
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Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
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Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
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Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
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*Continued from back cover*

### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4262
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4262

### **Public transit**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4263
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4263

### **Hydro rates**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4264
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4264

### **Accessibility for the disabled**

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4264
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4264

### **Visitors**

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4264
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4265

### **Rectification au procès-verbal**

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4265
---------------------------------	------

### **Visitors / Visiteurs**

Mr. Todd Smith .....	4265
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4265

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4265
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4265
Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4265
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4265
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4265
Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4265
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4265
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4265
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4265
Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4265
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4265

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Science Hill Drifters Snowmobile Club**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4265
----------------------------	------

### **Education funding**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4266
-------------------------	------

### **Pythons' Pit**

Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4266
---------------------------	------

### **Ingersoll playground**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4266
--------------------------	------

### **Gasoline prices**

Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4267
-----------------------	------

### **Helen Henderson**

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4267
---------------------------------	------

### **Schools in Rockwood**

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4267
----------------------	------

### **Hypertension**

Mrs. Amrit Mangat .....	4267
-------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Supply Chain Management Association Ontario Act, 2015, Bill Pr19, Mr. Rinaldi**

First reading agreed to .....	4268
-------------------------------	------

### **Safer Roads and Safer Communities Act, 2015, Bill 99, Mr. Natyshak / Loi de 2015 sur la sécurité accrue des routes et des collectivités, projet de loi 99, M. Natyshak**

First reading agreed to .....	4268
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4268

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Community Living Day / Journée de l'intégration communautaire**

Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4268
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4269
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4270

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Ontario Retirement Pension Plan**

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4270
-----------------------	------

### **Hospital funding**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4271
--------------------------	------

### **Climate change**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4271
------------------------	------

### **Ontario Disability Support Program**

Mr. Robert Bailey .....	4271
-------------------------	------

### **Ontario Northland Transportation Commission**

Mr. John Vanthof .....	4272
------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4272
-----------------------------	------

### **Off-road vehicles**

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4272
-----------------------	------

### **Special-needs children**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4272
-------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4273
-----------------------	------

**Health care funding**

Mr. Norm Miller ..... 4273

**Lyme disease**

Mr. Michael Mantha ..... 4273

**Employment practices**

Mr. Arthur Potts ..... 4273

Mr. Percy Hatfield ..... 4297

Ms. Catherine Fife ..... 4299

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 4301

Mr. John Vanthof ..... 4301

Vote deferred ..... 4302

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR****Time allocation**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi ..... 4274

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4278

Ms. Andrea Horwath ..... 4280

Mr. Victor Fedeli ..... 4281

Mme France G  linas ..... 4285

Mr. Percy Hatfield ..... 4285

Vote deferred ..... 4285

**2015 Ontario budget**

Mr. Toby Barrett ..... 4285

Mr. Robert Bailey ..... 4287

Vote deferred ..... 4288

**Time allocation**

Hon. James J. Bradley ..... 4288

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4290

Mr. Gilles Bisson ..... 4291

Mr. Ted Arnott ..... 4292

**Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, 2015, Bill 9,  
Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur l'abandon du  
charbon pour un air plus propre, projet de loi 9,  
M. Murray**

Hon. Jeff Leal ..... 4302

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4302

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 4302

Mr. Arthur Potts ..... 4303

Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 4303

M. Shafiq Qadri ..... 4303

Hon. Steven Del Duca ..... 4304

Mr. Lou Rinaldi ..... 4305

Ms. Soo Wong ..... 4306

Mr. Norm Miller ..... 4306

Ms. Cindy Forster ..... 4307

Mr. Glenn Thibeault ..... 4307

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 4307

Mr. Lou Rinaldi ..... 4308

Second reading debate deemed adjourned ..... 4308



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 11 May 2015 / Lundi 11 mai 2015

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4245
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4245
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	4245
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4245
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4245
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	4245
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4245
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4245
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4245
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4245
Mme France Gélinas .....	4245
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4245
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4245
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4245
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4245
Hon. Mitzie Hunter .....	4245
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4245
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4245
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4245
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4245
Mr. Harinder S. Takhar .....	4245
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4245
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4245
<b>Hon. Philippe Couillard</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4246
L'hon. Philippe Couillard .....	4246
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4250
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4250
M. Patrick Brown .....	4251
Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4252

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4253
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4253
Hon. Bill Mauro .....	4253
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4253
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4253
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4253
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4254
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4254
Mr. Jim McDonnell .....	4254

Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4254
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4254
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4254

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4254
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4254
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4255

### Hydro rates

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4255
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4255
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4255

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4256
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4256

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4257
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4257

### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Michael Harris .....	4258
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4258

### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4259
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4259

### La francophonie

M. Shafiq Qadri .....	4259
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4259

### Hydro One

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4260
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4260

### Personal support workers

Mme France Gélinas .....	4260
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4261

### Nurses

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4261
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4261

### Hospital services

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4262
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4262
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4262

*Continued on inside back cover*



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First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 12 May 2015**

**Mardi 12 mai 2015**



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Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 12 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 12 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### INVASIVE SPECIES ACT, 2015 LOI DE 2015 SUR LES ESPÈCES ENVAHISSANTES

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 14, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species / Projet de loi 37, Loi concernant les espèces envahissantes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When we last debated this issue, Mr. Hardeman had the floor and was complete. We are now into the two-minute rotation.

Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** This bill is an important bill that we should be discussing in the House. It is needed but, like a lot of this legislation, it is only enabling legislation. We don't know what, actually, the regulations will look like. Which would be something of substance—if we could actually discuss what things are, effectively, going to be done in this bill. So we don't know what those regulations look like. We're not sure about the plan for implementation. We're also not sure about the funding—if it will be there. I guess, in concept or the idea, it's great to bring it here; it's a starting point for discussion about invasive species. So we're happy that it is here, but we wish there was more substance to the bill.

Invasive species are in every riding. It's a big issue, especially in the northern ridings. So we welcome that this has come to the Legislative Assembly.

This might be a little bit off topic, but just recently I was watching the news and they were talking about pesticides being sprayed on plants. We're all going to go and get our plants for the May 24 weekend, and I didn't realize that. They actually spray them with pesticides, and there are neonicotinoids on those plants, and it affects the bee population.

So there are a lot of things we're not sure about in our environment, and I'm glad that we have these bills that bring those things to attention, and this one about invasive species is certainly a welcome discussion we need to have in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments? The Minister of Northern—

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Development and Mines.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Forgive me.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is really important legislation. I think to receive support from all three parties in the House—certainly as a former Minister of Natural Resources and, obviously, as an MPP for a northern riding, I'm very conscious, as I think all members of the Legislature are, about endangered species.

We've certainly seen the history related to zebra mussels and the impact that has had. Obviously, the efforts we make to keep the Asian carp out of our waters are important. And the other one that I give great credit to many communities for is the emerald ash borer, the work that has been done to manage that.

The bottom line is that right now we have a patchwork of more than 20 federal and provincial acts designed to deal with invasive species. What this will be is the first stand-alone legislation in Canada that will actually address those issues.

I listened very carefully to the comments from my colleague across the floor. Those are all fair questions, but I also think I heard that there will be support for the legislation moving forward. There still are a number of invasive species that have not yet found their way into the province of Ontario; we need to be able to do what we can to make sure that, indeed, that is the case.

One looks at the mountain pine beetle species, particularly in western Canada, and the impact it had on the forestry industry.

This is something that I think means a lot to all of us on this side of the House. I think I can speak comfortably for all those on the other side of the House—I see the member for Algoma-Manitoulin nodding vigorously, and I appreciate that. We hope to see support from all parties related to this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate this morning on Bill 37 and bring some comments in regard to the 20-minute presentation from our critic for municipal affairs and housing and former Minister of Agriculture. So he knows a thing or two about what he speaks of on this situation.

This bill was actually rushed through and didn't receive proper consultation. We need to make sure that if we're going to bring in a bill like this in Ontario we get it right. What we've seen time and time again from this



government is that they're bringing in legislation that sounds good and it may be warranted, and I think the heart is in the right place in the legislation, but they haven't actually done the homework; they haven't actually done the public consultation that needs to take place. As we've seen with other pieces of legislation from this government, there are often unintended consequences even though the legislation might be headed in the right direction, when the homework hasn't been done to make sure we have the best piece of legislation possible.

This bill was rushed and didn't receive adequate public consultation. We hope there will be public consultation. We know that invasive species are a problem in Ontario. We have the zebra mussels in the Bay of Quinte—which is entirely cleaned up, the Bay of Quinte, but there are other forms of Asian carp, which are causing significant problems in the Great Lakes as well. The emerald ash borer, the Asian long-horned beetle, the purple loosestrife, and the gypsy moth—these are all examples of invasive species here now in Ontario that are causing problems to the ecosystems in our province. We want to make sure that we take the time, get this right, have the proper debate, have the proper consultation and make sure that this is the best piece of legislation possible.

0910

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments? The member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I spoke to this bill a couple of weeks ago when it was really a pleasure speaking again on behalf of the good people of Algoma-Manitoulin. Yes, it's absolutely needed. This is legislation that I look forward to working on and moving into committee.

I met with the North Channel Marine Tourism Council in my riding, a very active group along the North Shore, which is very concerned about invasive species. However, in this particular piece of legislation—which is why I'm looking forward to having it in committee. I'll use the analogy that they utilized when I met with the council. It's like going out fishing. You're going out fishing and there are certain things you need. You need a boat; you need a motor; you need tackle and you need bait. However, if there's no line in your rod, if there's no gas to put in that motor or if there's no plug in the boat, you're not getting too far offshore.

What has been happening over many years is that it's so easy to cut back on MNR—the scientists, the field workers and the investment that needs to be done in MNR to make sure that enforcement of this legislation is going to be done, will be monitored, is going to be inspected. Those numbers, those studies and those surveys are going to come back to provide us with the guidance we're going to need to make sure we're taking the right path.

I want to make sure that if we're going out fishing we're going to come back with some fish. This is important; this is what is lacking in this piece of legislation.

I look forward to working with my friends from across the way once we get to committee, because, of course,

this needs to get to committee to have further discussions about it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Oxford for final comments.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I am pleased to be able to rise again to speak to Bill 37. As the Speaker will remember—you were in the chair on April 14—when I made my presentation time ran out so we didn't have time for questions or comments. That's why I was not surprised today, when we got questions and comments, we didn't get much reference to what I had said, only to what the bill was about as their debate, which was a good thing. At the same time, I understand that when it's questions and comments, they're supposed to make comments, and then I'm supposed to answer those questions. Obviously, we don't have to do that.

The last time I spoke to this bill, as I said, was on April 14. A lot has happened since then. The government introduced another budget with a significant deficit. On May 1, Ontario's hydro rate increased by 15%. Our party elected a new leader, Patrick Brown.

Yesterday, Patrick spoke in this Legislature about the importance of having a Premier who addresses these issues, someone who can deliver balanced budgets and affordable hydro. The spiralling cost of hydro is a significant concern to people and businesses in my riding, and I want to commend Patrick for highlighting the need for more affordable energy.

There are a number of other things that have happened, but I just want to say how we're looking forward to moving from here to 2018 with a new leader and replacing this government with that new leader. I think that's really what I wanted to say. I commend all the members opposite for agreeing with me and providing me with the time to talk about Patrick, as opposed to talking about their questions and comments on this bill.

But again, I think it was very important that the members from Algoma-Manitoulin, Prince Edward-Hastings, London-Fanshawe and the Minister of Natural Resources—I commend them all for making comments to my presentation of April 14.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour and a privilege to be able to stand in this House on behalf of the residents of Timiskaming-Cochrane and on behalf of my fellow colleagues in the New Democratic caucus and today speak on Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species.

I'd first like to comment on the comments from the member from Oxford. I have a lot of respect for the member from Oxford, but I noticed that he didn't even comment on his own speech—because I'm sure he wasn't commenting on the new leader of his party in his speech a few months ago. But I digress.

I would like to start off by saying we are fully in favour of the principle behind this act. Invasive species are a huge issue across this province. To follow up on the member from Algoma-Manitoulin's fishing theme, I read something a couple of days ago that adds to this debate.

Do you realize that the earthworms we fish with are actually an invasive species? The earthworms were destroyed in the ice age—the North American earthworms—and the ones that we now live with came in the ballast of ships. Now they use water for ballast. They used to use soil, and the earthworms came with the soil. Had this Invasive Species Act been enacted hundreds of years ago, we might have been fighting the earthworms.

But I don't think there's much danger of that—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Not all species are invasive.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Not all—but the problem with that—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Hey, if the Invasive Species Act was enacted they wouldn't have let me in.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** And there's proof, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I would like to remind the speaker to address the Chair and not to engage in dialogue with other members who may be trying to egg you on to some degree, digging wormholes a little bit deeper. I would ask that you continue, but please address the Chair. Thank you very much.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you for that reminder, Chair.

But the overarching problem with this bill is not the bill itself. It's the fact that—where are the funds going to come from to actually make this bill relevant? I'm sure that the Minister of Natural Resources and the ministry are doing the best they can with the tools at their disposal, but the fact of the matter is that this government has chosen to keep giving the ministry less tools and less funds. In part of my riding we have two conservation officers that cover 50 townships. We're not talking about invasive species; we're talking about managing wildlife and managing the regulations that govern wildlife. Realistically, two conservation officers cannot manage 50 townships. That's purely a funding issue.

This is enabling legislation that gives the government power to do many things, but it doesn't demonstrate that the government actually has the will to manage the problem. Sure, there are the high-profile ones: There are zebra mussels, Asian carp and the emerald ash borer. Those are the high-profile ones, the ones that people notice and the government tries to respond to. But if you're really going to take a long-term approach, which you have to when you're talking about nature because invasive species are part of nature, you have to use the science at your disposal. You have to have enough people on the ground to actually make this legislation meaningful. This government hasn't demonstrated that, because they don't have the people on the ground to actually manage wildlife. One of the government's jobs is to manage wildlife, manage hunting, manage fishing, manage or help manage populations. They don't have the people on the ground to do that now.

We'll take the moose population, for one. The most heavily hunted moose wildlife management unit is unit 28. They're supposed to do an aerial wildlife survey every three years.

*Interjection.*

0920

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Five years, Speaker. So they are two years over the date. If it's supposed to be scientifically valid at three years, and you take the area with the most population and you only fly it every five years because of lack of funding—I'm sure it's not because the ministry doesn't want to do it. There are very credible people within the ministry. But when they're not even getting the science right on something as basic as a moose count, then you wonder if they actually would put the resources in to make Bill 37 a truly meaningful piece of legislation.

It's a question that has to be asked. I can remember—I'm not that old—when the MNR, the Ministry of Natural Resources, in my part of the world was a major ministry and they actually played a meaningful role. They were on the ground; not everybody liked it, but they were on the ground. You knew that the MNR was actually, if you were going to try to do something that wasn't right—or if you had a question, the MNR was on the ground, and they would help you. Now, they're so short-staffed that the answer is usually no, not because they don't want to help you; they don't have time to help you.

That, actually, in its own way, makes wildlife management and invasive species management much more difficult. If the MNR actually had people on the ground and you identify—because the first people who are going to identify, at least in my part of the world, invasive species or problems with endangered species or problems with game species are the people on the ground. And when they have a good relationship with the MNR, because there's enough MNR people on the ground, you would identify issues a lot sooner.

There are not enough people on the ground right now to identify problems with common species, so where are these people going to come from who are going to identify problems with invasive species—until they hit the news. But by the time they hit the news, I think part of the battle has already been lost. By the time it becomes a normal topic of conversation, like zebra mussels or the emerald ash borer, you know the impact of this bill has already—because the government is going to move. The government is going to move on an obvious, in-your-face, in-the-news threat. What this bill should be looking for is, the MNR has to catch these things before they hit the news. And since now they don't even catch wildlife problems before they hit the news, I really wonder, Speaker, where the money is going to come from.

Another issue with this bill is, there's actually nothing—the bill has got a lot of good intentions, which we agree with fully, fully up front. We fully agree with the intent of this bill. But, again, it leaves all the meat to regulation.

It also leaves the door open to third-party—so the minister may appoint people to take action, some fairly severe actions, which might be warranted. But these, again, could be a third party. And we've had experience when governments have gone the third-party route. One experience is TSSA, which is a third party, not really controlled—it's a government agency but not really



controlled by the government. It answers, really, to no one.

Again, I'll use my riding as an example. I think most MPPs do because we know our own ridings best. The TSSA regulates gas stations and heating equipment, which is great. But because they hardly ever come to my riding—and when they show up, it's like a blitz. Mom-and-pop places are treated the same as huge company outlets, and the mom-and-pops are basically driven out of business—but not because they don't want to comply, Speaker. They don't have time to comply. That's because it's not a regular process, and it's third-party. I know my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin and myself and, I'm sure, other members from across the House have tried to help with that process, but to little avail, specifically in rural, isolated places.

This could lead to the same problem. When the MNR is understaffed and you go to third-party inspectors—who, really, again, don't directly answer to this Legislature, because everything here is done to regulation, so this isn't going to come back to the Legislature; this goes back to the minister—everyone across the province might not be treated the same. That's a bigger problem with third-party regulators than it is with public servants—it is. And it's something that we've all experienced.

So you could very well have an invasive species issue in one part of the province, and an invasive species issue in another part of the province, and it could be that the one in part B is a bigger problem, but much stronger tactics might be used in part A because of the difference in enforcement. And that's a problem.

This act provides very strong powers—very strong. Again, it's likely in some cases that those powers are needed. But when you give such strong powers, you have to ensure—and we have to ensure, on behalf of the people—that they're applied evenly and fairly and that the people who are impacted have some sort of recourse. That often isn't the case, specifically when you have third-party regulators. That is concerning.

I'd like to read the explanatory note: “The minister may also enter into agreements relating to the control and management of invasive species in Ontario. Such an agreement may authorize a person to engage in an activity that would otherwise be prohibited.”

That little paragraph, if you think about it, has got a lot of power in it. If you read further in the act, there's not a lot of recourse. And when you put those two big issues together—lack of money within the MNR; lack of will from the government to actually provide that funding, but a willingness to hire a third party because they think it's cheaper—and if you start hiring third parties because of the lower costs, you know where that leads.

We've just had an example of that—and this is an example that relates to this—where the government privatized winter road maintenance. It wasn't the contractors; it was the government who created this process to whittle every dime out—I'm going to come back to the bill, Speaker—of the winter maintenance budget. They whittled every dime out. They basically forced the con-

tractors to lowball their own contracts. They forced the contractors to knowingly—know they were going to have a hard time meeting the standards.

If they do the same thing with the Invasive Species Act and they put out requests for contracts for invasive species inspectors or invasive species monitors—however they're going to do it—and they structure the contracts in such a way that they're going to save the maximum amount of dollars, is that actually going to solve the problem or even help the problem? It certainly didn't help with winter road maintenance; it had very dire consequences with winter road maintenance, the way those contracts are structured. If they're going to do the same type of thing—because it's the same type of issue. A lot of invasive species problems and a lot of wildlife problems—except for a few very, very in-your-face ones like Asian carp—a lot of those issues happen in the hinterland.

#### 0930

As we've seen, in my life in northern Ontario, when I was a kid, MNR was a huge force, and now MNR is barely existent on the ground. If the same issue is going to be with invasive species—it's great to talk about invasive species here; the trick is to actually make it work outside of this House. It's easy to talk about making new regs here. It's been much more difficult—and we've seen it time and time again—to actually make these regs work outside. What looks nice in a press release and what looks nice in the Toronto Star sometimes doesn't really work by the time it gets to Timiskaming. I think that's the biggest issue.

The biggest issue with this bill is—the principles are good—that the government has decided to give the minister all the power, all the regulation and it doesn't come back to the Legislature. That's an ongoing problem with all bills. It's a huge, huge problem that the Ministry of Natural Resources' impact on the ground in places where they need to be has basically been gutted over the last 10 years. If that is the precursor to how the Invasive Species Act is going to be handled in the future, then I think we're in for a rough road.

I think, once again, this act has the problem of maybe not being effective or, an even worse problem, because there are not enough people and resources on the ground from the ministry. Instead of taking thoughtful action, they take—what's the opposite of thoughtful, Speaker? Instead of fixing the issue, they'll be lacking resources and they'll come at it with a sledgehammer when it's already too late. That will hurt society and won't be effective on invasive species. That's a big issue. You're better off to spend the money you need to actually make the act work than to wait too long and have to spend a lot more money on trying to fix the problem and you know you're not likely going to be successful.

The bottom line is the MNR needs more money to manage what it currently manages now, and it's going to need a lot more resources if it's going to do this correctly.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Thank you very much for the opportunity here. I thank the member opposite for his comments.

It's good to hear that on the opposite side of the House there is support for Bill 37, invasive species legislation. It's good to hear that people understand absolutely that what we're doing here is necessary. The threat that is already in Ontario and the cost associated with invasive species is significant. The impending threat from invasive species that are not yet here is even much more intimidating when you contemplate exactly what may happen should some of the invasive species that we're most concerned with absolutely arrive in Ontario. It's good to hear that both parties on the opposite side of the House are supportive of the legislation.

What I want to say, though, is that the theme of the member's speech was primarily around resources with which to implement, on the ground, this legislation, should it pass through the House and when it comes back from committee. What I want to mention to the House and for people that are interested in the debate following this on television is that there is already work that is going on. For a number of years, we already have had partnerships in place that are dealing with invasive species. This legislation is not the jumping-off point for work on invasives on the part of our government.

We have had a partnership in place for a significant period of time with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. We've been funding them to the tune of \$300,000 to \$400,000 a year. They're doing work for us on invasives already. We put \$9 million into the Invasive Species Centre in Sault Ste. Marie that has been doing work on invasive species already. The federal government has rules in place that deal with invasive species. So please don't let anybody who is following this be left with the impression that work hasn't already begun and that there aren't other partnerships out there in the province of Ontario that aren't already helping us and leveraging the work that MNRF does to deal with the threat and looming danger that's posed by invasive species.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It is a pleasure to rise this morning to again talk about and add some feedback regarding Bill 37, the Invasive Species Act. Of course, we heard some great comments this morning from the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane. I really liked his quote when he said that the MNR is barely existent on the ground. That hits home for me. The MNR plays an important role and it's important to the people of my riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

The issue that comes to mind and one of the biggest issues today facing the people of my riding is the issue of phragmites. Of course, I've raised it a number of times. I've been working for the last couple of years on this issue.

We have a really great working group in our riding. One of the people who was instrumental to getting the phragmites community working group going was Nancy

Vidler from Lambton Shores. She lives in Port Franks. They took me for a tour on the ground to see first-hand the devastating impact that phragmites is having along Lake Huron in my riding, almost from Sarnia to Grand Bend. There's an issue with phragmites along the shore.

Of course, Speaker, I know in your riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex, I believe in the Blenheim area, Rondeau, probably all along there, there are issues as well. But this speaks to why we need this government to make MNR a priority, especially on the ground. There have been cut-backs. I feel that they're not making it a priority. They continue to cut back front-line services in the MNR, and it's having a devastating impact across Ontario.

I also want to pay special tribute to two caucus members of mine, the MPPs from Elgin—Middlesex—London and Haldimand—Norfolk, who are taking the lead on phragmites and that issue in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**M. Michael Mantha:** C'est tout le temps un plaisir de prendre la parole pour les gens de ma circonscription d'Algoma—Manitoulin, en suivant les commentaires de mon collègue de Timiskaming—Cochrane a offerts ce matin.

Il a commencé en parlant des ressources, et puis il a parlé de son âge. Il n'est pas si vieux que ça; il n'est pas si jeune que ça non plus. Mais moi aussi, je me rappelle un temps où j'allais rencontrer mon papa, qui sortait du ministère—dans ce temps-là, c'était le « Department of Lands and Forests ». Je marchais; j'allais le rencontrer. J'espérais qu'il y avait des restes dans sa boîte à lunch que je pouvais manger en m'allant à la maison—et bien avoir une petite jasette avec mon père.

Dans ma petite communauté de Gogama, on avait environ 240 personnes qui travaillaient à MNR. C'était énorme. C'était une industrie qui était extrêmement attirante au développement, mais il y avait beaucoup de gens qui travaillaient là aussi. Il y avait beaucoup de ressources et beaucoup de gens qui allaient dans les chantiers, dans les forêts, dans les rivières et sur les lacs pour faire certain que les ressources étaient là. Puis on savait ce qu'était le problème, surtout à l'égard des espèces envahissantes.

Mais aujourd'hui, si je me rappelle bien la dernière fois que j'étais à Gogama—et je retourne en fin de semaine pour voir mon beau-père et ma belle-mère—je pense qu'il y a quatre personnes qui travaillent à MNR—quatre personnes. Puis, les quatre autres personnes qui travaillaient là à un temps sont maintenant en train de voyager de Gogama à Timmins, pour embarquer dans un véhicule pour revenir à Gogama et finir leur journée de travail, et à la fin de la journée, ils retournent à Timmins.

**0940**

Quand on regarde où ils mettent des ressources, je pense que c'est grosso modo de ce que parlait mon collègue quand il offrait ses commentaires.

Oui, on va supporter ceci, et puis, on le regarde. Je suis encouragé que mon collègue le ministre a offert une idée de ce que sont ces ressources-là qui ont été mises



dedans, mais, vraiment, l'essentiel de ce projet de loi est de faire certain que l'argent et le voeu sont là pour améliorer la situation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Certainly, it's good to hear that the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane supports Bill 37.

As you know, Bill 37 is part of a comprehensive plan to have all the partners, all the stakeholders, deal comprehensively with invasive species. You can't get anywhere unless you have this comprehensive planning within government to deal with these invasive species. We need this plan to implement coordination with all our partners, including the federal government and the local conservation authorities.

I'll be speaking to this bill in a couple of minutes, and I'm going to speak about my two favourite subjects, one of which is the disappearance of the smelts. What happened to the hundreds of millions of lake smelts in our Great Lakes? They disappeared, and nobody knows what happened to them. That's an example of why we need to look at our aquatic species, our biodiversity in this province, not only in rural and northern areas, which is critical, but also in urban areas.

My riding is on the border of two amazing historical watersheds, the Don Valley watershed and the Humber River watershed. In fact, the Humber River watershed was first visited by a francophone, who is never mentioned in this House. We hear about Champlain all the time—wonderful—but we never hear about Étienne Brûlé. He came to these shores 400 years ago; an amazing explorer who came down the Humber River watershed. We do have Étienne Brûlé Park here in Toronto, down by the Humber River, the Old Mill.

Anyways, I'll be speaking about Étienne Brûlé and the smelts, and the Eurasian milfoil, another invasive species.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane for his final comments.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to thank the Minister of Natural Resources, the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for their comments, et le député d'Algoma–Manitoulin pour ses commentaires.

I didn't want to leave the idea that there are no funds currently being spent. The problem is, there's been a steady erosion of funding for the MNR. The argument we'll get back is, "Oh no, look at the graphs," but if you look at the overall government spending, the portion spent on the natural resources of this province is going down. And that is not a very good bellwether when you're talking about invasive species, or when you're talking about any type of legislation which deals with natural resources, because invasive species are a threat to natural resources.

They're not a threat to places that are not part of nature, right here. Where your invasive species are the biggest threat is natural environments. If you keep letting the amount of funding that goes to natural resources

erode, then you're not going to be very effective at fighting invasive species.

So the bottom line is, we need to put a bigger priority on the natural resources of this province. Endangered species, invasive species and the natural species: This isn't something we can manage from an office. You need to have people on the ground.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's a pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge today to add my voice to the debate on the Invasive Species Act—very important in my own riding.

I just wanted to sort of start off to say how pleased I am—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'm sharing your time.

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I'm sorry; I'm sharing my time with the members from Eglinton–Lawrence, Beaches–East York and Scarborough–Agincourt. I apologize, Speaker.

I'm very happy to enter into this debate and also be part of a government that has seen fit to take action to address the very serious threat of invasive species to Ontario's economy and also to our natural environment. It also puts our resource-based jobs at risk. It certainly affects Cambridge and North Dumfries, my riding, with tourism and agriculture, and I'll let you know why.

Cambridge and North Dumfries township are nestled along the banks of the Speed and the Grand rivers. The Grand River is part of the national designated heritage rivers in Canada. It's one of the few that actually go through the urban areas. We're very proud of that. But Cambridge is very blessed with trails along the banks of the Speed and in particular the Grand River. The Paris to Cambridge trail is an old rail trail. It goes along the banks of the Grand and is used by thousands and thousands of people for cycling, walking and running.

It's not just the trails but it's the fishing. The Grand River is shallow enough. There are a lot of fly fishermen and fishermen that are out on the weekend, and canoeing along the Grand has become a major sport for the residents in Cambridge.

In saying that, we also have a large agricultural sector in North Dumfries township. My neighbours grow corn, soybeans—cattle, sheep and chickens. They are very concerned about some of the invasive species that we're facing.

We also have a lot of environmentally sensitive protected areas in our area. I actually happen to live in one in North Dumfries township. Interestingly, I became aware of invasive species when I moved to North Dumfries township about 25 years ago. At that time purple loosestrife was a big threat and overtaking our wetlands and our ponds. We have a lot of wetlands that dot throughout North Dumfries township and in Cambridge that were threatened by this invasive species.

So I've been quite aware of that since I've moved out there. Because of that, we really watch out for the last remnants of the Carolinian forest and the Sudden Bog,

which is a class 1 wetland right behind my house, two fields back. So, we're very concerned about, really, the threat from phragmites. I know the member opposite was just talking about that along the watersheds in his area. We're very concerned about this aggressive plant that spreads so quickly and out-competes native species for water and nutrients. It damages Ontario's beaches and the wetlands. As I said, it's abundant in Cambridge. It affects agriculture, causes road safety hazards and impacts recreational activities, such as boating and angling, in my area.

I'm very supportive of seeing this proposed legislation carry out—the continuing of debate here and then to be passed and get into our legislative framework for Ontario, so it will be better to prevent, detect and rapidly respond to these invasive species, especially phragmites. We need this legislation. We know many municipalities are faced with large bills to eradicate, detect and address the threat from all kinds of invasive species.

I'm very supportive of this and glad I could add my voice to the debate this morning.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I recognize the member from Eglinton—Lawrence.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to continue on this important Bill 37. As you know, this is the only stand-alone legislation of its kind in all of Canada. So we're waiting anxiously for this to be implemented. The rest of Canada will follow, I hope, because we need this coordination through this legislation to give the government of Ontario and its relevant ministries the power to protect our province from invasive species. We know there are just so many—everything from the Asian long-horned beetle to the emerald ash borer to the phragmites to the ruffe to zebra mussels, so we need this legislation. We need this new, coordinating legislative act to protect our waterways, green spaces and our wetlands for generations to come. I think everybody agrees we need it.

0950

The interesting thing is that in the urban area of metropolitan Toronto, as I mentioned before, there are two giant watersheds: the Don River watershed and the Humber River watershed. I've been involved in the Humber River watershed for many years. And years ago, in the Humber River all you would find is basically some carp, a few minnows, a lot of garbage—everything from shopping carts—the shorelines were all eroding. The Black Creek tributary and the Lavender Creek were cemented over. The Humber River was basically a dead river, as was the Don.

There was a public activity that coordinated around cleaning up the Humber River. As a result of friends of the Humber River, the river has been restored to a healthy state. We're still working on the Black Creek, we're still working on the Lavender Creek. In the Lavender Creek there was all kinds of industrial runoff that was killing the Lavender Creek, which fed into the Black Creek, which fed into the Humber River, which fed into Lake Ontario, and that's the water we drink in the greater To-

ronto and Hamilton area. In other words, if you've got clean rivers, clean streams, you're going to have clean lakes and clean drinking water.

If you go up the Humber River, there are up to 25-pound salmon that make their way up the Humber River to spawn every September right in the middle of Toronto. I'm sure in Scarborough they've never seen these giant salmon. They should come and visit the Humber River valley and see the giant salmon by the thousands making their way up this river that was once dead—right in the middle of Toronto. That's because the health of the river has been restored by the conservation authority, by the friends of the Humber River. Madeleine McDowell has long been the advocate of that. She won the Order of Canada for her work on that.

You can restore waterways but it needs a coordinated effort. You have to work with the NGOs, city officials, conservation officials, provincial officials, federal officials, and there has to be a public education campaign. Students in our schools, our non-profit organizations and the general public have to be aware that we all have a stake in clean water, blocking invasive species and being aware of what they are.

I said before that we used to have millions of smelts in our Great Lakes. Lake Superior used to be the home of smelts. I guess they used to catch 10 million or 20 million pounds of smelt a year. Now they catch zero.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** The Current River dam in Thunder Bay.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Yes, the Current River dam in Thunder Bay. There are no smelts left in Thunder Bay. This is shocking. Where did the millions and millions of smelt go?

In Lake Ontario, we used to catch smelts by the bushel basket. They've disappeared. What happened? No one knows; can't explain it. So we need to do the science, we need to do the coordination to find out what's happening to our species.

Another species which I've had a bit of experience with is a very, very invasive species: the Eurasian milfoil. It is coming into all of our rivers and streams and lakes and it is devastating them. Where does it come from? How can we stop the Eurasian milfoil?

The Eurasian milfoil came from Asia, obviously, and it is very aggressive and it wipes out the native plant species—wipes them out in lakes; it creates dead lakes. The Eurasian milfoil reduces the oxygen levels. I know up at Lake Wilcox, north of Toronto, they have an aqualung in the lake to keep it alive because the Eurasian milfoil has killed the oxygen in Lake Wilcox. They have to mechanically keep it alive.

Thick mats of Eurasian water-milfoil can hinder recreational activities such as swimming, boating and fishing. What are we doing about the Eurasian milfoil? It's everywhere. Dense stands of this stuff create stagnant water, which is an ideal habitat for mosquitoes.

We've got to coordinate our efforts through this legislation to do something about the Eurasian milfoil, to do something about finding out what happened to the hun-



dreds of millions of smelts that have disappeared from our Great Lakes.

We've got to find out what causes these things and prevent them from happening, with good, coordinated research, and that's what Bill 37 does—the only kind of legislation in Canada. We need this legislation yesterday.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I recognize the member from Beaches—East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It gives me great pleasure to speak to Bill 37, the Invasive Species Act. I want to thank the Minister of Natural Resources for bringing this piece of legislation back, and also to give credit where it should be due, to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, who introduced this act originally last year.

It is such an important piece of legislation, a coordinated approach between so many different jurisdictions to create the kinds of partnerships and networks that we need to get ahead and control and combat the invasive species that are affecting our province. It's costing us billions of dollars, and it's costing us in tourism and recreation.

I'm so delighted that the member from Cambridge talked about the Grand River and the great opportunities for fly-fishing. I've had the pleasure of being on that river many, many times and catching the most beautiful species of trout on a regular basis. The threat to that community from the various kinds of invasive species is very, very troubling to people like myself who so much enjoy that opportunity.

I learned about conservation from a very dear family friend, Sandy Stuart. Sandy Stuart was president of Electrolyser Corp. They were pioneers in the creation of hydrogen power in Canada.

When Sandy Stuart was a young man in his twenties, he and a group of friends went and bought a vast tract of land up near Georgian Bay. It was a club called the Tadenac Club. Although it is a private lake, they did this as a conservation measure, because they were concerned 50, 60 years ago about the impact of overfishing and improper management.

They've developed this incredibly facility, which I've had the pleasure of being up to and fishing in. Their concerns about conservation are so extreme that for every single one of the inland lakes that they have as part of this property, there's absolutely no bait transfer between these lakes. It's all fly-fishing; it's all dead flies or tied flies, so we're not moving bait between. When you leave one lake, you leave your boat behind and you do the trek and the traverse to the next lake, where there's a boat on the other side. We're carrying electronic motors back and forth between them. We're trying so hard to ensure that, through our boots and through our boats, we're not passing invasive species. This is an incredible watershed which has pickerel, or walleye to some of us. It has small largemouth bass, pike and garfish in abundance. It is such an incredible, incredible opportunity for us to help preserve. They're very careful about the kinds of plants and other invasive species that might otherwise get into that environment.

Some of you will remember, from my earlier speeches, the work I did in wood waste management. I started a business almost 30 years ago with a very good friend of mine in wood waste recovery. We would take broken pallets and skids from manufacturing and grind them up into wood chip, which we would then use for industrial processes. We were situated up in the Weston-Finch area, where we would bring in wood from all over the world. Shipping pallets, coming in from Asia, would come into our facility. We would grind them up into piles of wood and we would ship them out.

In the midst of our tenancy in this neighbourhood, the long-horned beetle made an appearance in the Weston neighbourhood and had a devastating impact on the trees in Vaughan, in Concord, in North York, where the cities had to respond by cutting down great swaths of green trees all through the area, creating all this additional wood waste.

For the longest time, we worried that we were part of this problem. Maybe we had imported them through our skids and pallets that we were bringing from manufacturing establishments. So we then initiated a process to make sure that all the shipping containers that were coming from overseas were going to be heat-treated as they arrived here, to ensure that no invasive species were travelling and coming in from foreign countries, in order to help protect the environment.

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Then we have people like Mark Mattson of Lake Ontario Waterkeeper, who has been so active in ensuring the quality of the Lake Ontario watershed and the tributaries leading into it. He's now involved in a program to try to bring back the American eel, which some would have seen as an invasive species, but was in fact a prominent live species of American eel, which was so important in the protein of our communities.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you it's so important that we get this bill to committee and passed as quickly as possible. I appreciate the support of the members opposite.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise this morning in support of Bill 37.

My colleagues have all spoken significantly about the impact of invasive species. I want to spend my little time that I have to focus on the economic and social cost of the invasive species in Ontario, across Canada, as well as internationally. The total net cost to Ontario for invasive species prevention, management, mitigation and associated research is unknown. However, there are several examples that illustrate the economic impacts of invasive species in Ontario.

In the city of Toronto, in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, I know that there have been a significant number of city-of-Toronto-owned trees killed by the emerald ash borer. That cost is about \$37 million over the last five years. The total cost of managing the impacts of zebra mussels in Ontario is estimated to be about \$75

million to \$91 million per year. Other species, like Asian carp, will have more long-lasting damage to the economic and environmental system. It is estimated that the impact will be \$2.2 billion on the recreational fishing industry here in Ontario alone. Just three invasive species, and this is how much the economic as well as the recreational costs to our system are.

The members opposite earlier this morning criticized the government for rushing to the finish line to have this bill. Let me remind the members opposite, we started this conversation in 2012. I don't know what happened in the last three years. Maybe we need to remind them what we have done. The ministry, under the current minister as well as the previous minister, started developing the Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan. In 2013, the then minister proposed the Invasive Species Act.

The member opposite also criticized that there were no stakeholder conversations about this particular bill. Let me challenge him, Mr. Speaker. We know the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters spoke. I'm going to quote their executive director, Angelo Lombardo. He said, "I am pleased that the Ontario government will reintroduce the Invasive Species Act, a positive step in the fight against invasive species. The sale, movement, and importation of invasive species in Ontario are of a serious concern."

Ducks Unlimited Canada—who I know fairly well because they have a partnership with my local high school Sir John A. Macdonald Collegiate—recently visited the school to thank the students for all the hard work that they've been doing with Ducks Unlimited in terms of wetland conservation. Their Ontario provincial director, Lynette Mader, has supported Bill 37: "We are pleased the invasive species legislation is being reintroduced. Invasive species are a serious threat to the biodiversity of Ontario's wetlands and waterfowl habitat. This is an important step forward in the prevention and control of risks posed by non-native plants and animal species."

Environmental Defence is a national organization that works to protect Canadians' environmental and human health. Nancy Goucher, the Ontario water program manager for Environmental Defence, supports the legislation: "Invasive species like Asian carp are a real threat to the Great Lakes ecosystem and its fishing, boating and tourism economies. We applaud the reintroduction of the Invasive Species Act which would allow the province to take" positive and proactive steps "in stopping new invasive species from taking hold in Ontario, and would enable the government to take action to eradicate invasive species that have become established."

It is quite clear. We have experts, we have stakeholders, and the government is taking leadership on this particular bill, more importantly, to protect the environment. At the end of the day, this Legislature has to protect planet Earth.

Yesterday, the Premier of Quebec talked about climate change. What does that really mean? It's about the environment, so I'm very, very pleased to speak in support of Bill 37.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes to respond to the comments of the government members on this important piece of legislation, the Invasive Species Act.

Yes, I recall, going back a few years to 1988 or 1989, one of our former members from Hastings–Peterborough, Jim Pollock, who served here with distinction for three terms—I believe the 32nd, 33rd and 34th Parliaments. He was very concerned about the whole issue of invasive species. He was raising the issue in the Legislature, I think, in the form of private members' bills and resolutions, if I'm not mistaken.

After I was first elected in 1990, the government of the day, the New Democrats, actually agreed that something had to be done with respect to improving provincial government policy to combat invasive species. I was assigned to serve on the Standing Committee on Resources Development. One of the very first items that we looked at—and if I'm not mistaken it was our party's initiative to have a study of invasive species with particular respect to purple loosestrife—you may remember that one—and also zebra mussels. We did an extensive series of public hearings to come up with ideas and an action plan for the government to ensure that we were able to confront this challenge and deal with it.

I say that to provide hopefully some historical perspective on this issue. As I said, I guess last week, so many of us in this Legislature assumed that nothing important happened until we arrived as members. In fact, there has been a lot of good work done by our predecessors, and we certainly do stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. I wanted to acknowledge Jim Pollock's role in this issue.

The fact is that our party has expressed support in principle for this particular piece of legislation. We do believe that it can be improved through the committee process. It's very important that we have a chance to listen to the public and have public hearings, and then the discussion that we always have in clause-by-clause, with amendments.

So I would hope that the government is open to listening to what the opposition has to say on this issue and that we will have a chance to improve it and strengthen it to ensure that the province of Ontario is facing the threat of invasive species head-on and bringing forward the appropriate public response.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I appreciated hearing the comments from the members opposite. The member from Cambridge, your comments about the trails—for making me think of my childhood, growing up and wandering the trails through areas, actually, that the member from Eglinton–Lawrence was talking about, near the Humber River. I spent a lot of time, growing up, down by the Humber River in the Bolton and Palgrave areas, appreciating the clean water and recognizing that that is



important—when we're talking about conversation work in our communities, and appreciating that the work of the friends of the Humber River is very important work. It's a reminder that we can't rely on the work of just our partners; it also has to be the government, of course, taking that active leadership role.

I'll talk about Oshawa, because now I look out my window and I see the Second Marsh. The Second Marsh is an urban wetland located in our area that boasts a dynamic ecosystem supporting a rich and diverse wildlife community and ecosystem, with 380 plant species, 305 bird species, a number of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and insects. There is a very active group in that area, the Friends of Second Marsh.

Just this past weekend they had a coordinated community effort of volunteers that involved friends and neighbours to address the invasive issue of garlic mustard. Garlic mustard is something that I hadn't been acquainted with. Of course, we've heard of purple loosestrife, phragmites and zebra mussels, but garlic mustard is taking over.

As I'm wearing my trillium pin, I recognize that we do need to be involved in our communities and to look after these invasive species, because we're losing our trillium in our neck of the woods.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's certainly a pleasure for me to rise today and to be able to speak about Bill 37. I'd like to congratulate and thank the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry for reintroducing this bill. It was introduced in February of last year and reintroduced in, I believe, November 2014.

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I just want to speak about two things. Of course, representing rural Ontario, we know that purple loosestrife is a major problem. It infests ditches around farmers' fields and that kind of thing. I'd like to congratulate a lot of the municipalities that are taking measures now to eradicate that specific invasive species, and, as well, a lot of homeowners in rural Ontario are actually now cutting down into the ditches in front of their own properties. In farming communities, farmers who have acres of rural road frontage are out with their lawn mowers on a regular basis to keep that down. I'd like to congratulate them as well.

When I was mayor of the township of North Glengarry—in Alexandria, we receive our water supply from a three-lake system; it's a self-contained system, spring-fed. You have Loch Garry, Middle Lake and Mill Pond, which is right in Alexandria. There's a particular issue that was referred to by the member from Eglinton—Lawrence—and other members have spoken about Eurasian milfoil. That has invaded the main water supply of the township of North Glengarry, and, as such, the township itself, in partnership with South Glengarry and the city of Cornwall, is looking at ways to find a new water source. We're going to partner with the city of Cornwall to bring water from Cornwall up into Alexan-

dria and to service Maxville as well. There are very, very difficult challenges in controlling Eurasian milfoil in water sources across the province.

Congratulations, Minister. This is a great piece of legislation. I look forward to moving it into committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 37, the Invasive Species Act. First of all, I just want to make a comment on the reference to Jim Pollock, who was a member of the Legislature here in the 32nd, 33rd and 34th Parliaments. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Pollock in Farmtown Park in Stirling a couple of months ago. He's doing extremely well and misses his days here at the Legislature. It's always nice to hear the stories of those who have been here longer than I have, like the member from Wellington—Halton Hills, who had the opportunity to meet and work with Jim Pollock, and to hear that what was an important issue way back then is still an issue for the province of Ontario today. Mr. Pollock is doing well and so is Harry Danford, who was at the same event with his wife, Lola. Harry would have served here, I believe, in the 36th Parliament and was a parliamentary assistant to the agriculture minister at that time.

Invasive species are still a problem in the Bay of Quinte region, where I come from, in Prince Edward—Hastings riding. The Bay of Quinte is a beautiful body of water that is actually extremely well-known across North America as one of the best places to go walleye fishing. A couple of weeks ago, we had the walleye world fishing derby of fishing season, kicking off on May 1. It is an amazing thing to see the Bay of Quinte, which was covered in ice all winter, nothing happening until May 1—midnight strikes, and then you can actually almost jump from boat to boat to boat because everybody flocks to the Bay of Quinte to catch some walleye.

Now, the fishing isn't quite as good as it was back then because of an invasive species called the zebra mussel, which a number of members have referenced here this morning. It has created a real problem in a world-class fishery, which is a real economic driver for our region. So it's important that we get this bill passed and make sure we get it right when it goes to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** It's now almost 10:15. This House stands—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Oh, forgive me. Sorry about that.

I recognize, for final comments, the member from Cambridge.

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you, Speaker. I wanted to say thank you. It has been an interesting debate from the members from Eglinton—Lawrence, Beaches—East York, Scarborough—Agincourt, Wellington—Halton Hills, Oshawa, Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and Prince Edward—Hastings.

It's interesting when you hear all the comments from members on all sides of the House, and it's good to hear

their support. All these invasive species that we're talking about in this act have affected all their ridings in one way or another. I think that's key to part of this legislation: Everybody needs to be on guard, on the defensive and be very aware of what it takes not only to recognize the threat of invasive species but also to ensure that we're not perpetuating the problem by not identifying and treating it properly.

I'm also happy to be part of a government that reaches out and develops partnerships because, as has been shown here, not just one ministry should be responsible for doing everything. We need to reach out and develop those partnerships. Managing invasive species has always been a collaborative effort with all levels of government, industry, environmental groups and the public.

I know that this government has developed strong partnerships to help us with education, prevention, monitoring, detection and research. Some of our well-developed policies that are coming forward have been because of the comments received not only from our fine partners—Ducks Unlimited and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, to begin with, and all kinds of user groups—but we also received positive comments when we posted the proposed legislation on the environmental registry last February.

In closing, Speaker, I think that we hear support from all sides of the House. I'm very much looking forward to getting this in committee and getting this bill passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I thank all members who engaged in debate this morning.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Now it is 10:15, and this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to welcome the Consul General for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Anne Gerard van Leeuwen, who is here today to celebrate Dutch Heritage Month and the flag-raising to follow this. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, you will properly introduce him later, but I wanted to say:

*Remarks in Dutch.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** People just love to step on my news.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Good morning. I have a couple of introductions to make. First is Mr. Vaqar Raees. I'd like to welcome him to the Legislature. He is the president of Friends Indeed, the Pak-Canadian Society of Durham. He's an active community member. Rumour has it he has a picture of Minister Naqvi as a baby in his arms, and I'll see that at lunch today. Thank you for being here.

My next introduction, if I may, is to introduce two very talented young women who joined my office as interns for the summer: Sophia Sugumar and Katie Martin. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It gives me great honour to introduce, from my riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Wayne and Dorothy Underhill. They're proud grandparents of page Colton Tompkins. He is the page captain today. Dorothy has been a nurse since 1957, and it's Nursing Week, so congratulations and welcome.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Please help me welcome the grade 10 students from St. Augustine Catholic High School in the great city of Markham.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm not sure where they went, but the PC interns were in the west members' gallery. I just want to recognize them: Spencer Belyea, Simon Jefferies, Alexandra Robinson and Jacob Klugsberg.

I'd like to also recognize one of our staff, Elric Pereira, who I affectionately call "Tiger."

I also would like to give a shout-out to my legislative team, Cody Welton and Jessica Lippert, for all their hard work. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It's always a pleasure to welcome Len Elliott and Pete Wright from OPSEU, who are here in the members' west gallery. It's great to see you here once again, as always.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** It's a great honour for me to introduce a very close friend of mine who is visiting Queen's Park. Major Felipe Quiroz-Borrero has served our country bravely. He has been to Afghanistan on two occasions now, on behalf of Canada. He is a very close personal friend of mine, and he's here at Queen's Park. I want all the members to thank him and welcome him for his service to our great country. Thank you, Felipe.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I would also like to welcome to Queen's Park this morning Anita Mark and Jill Morris, who have been good supporters of mine. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from London West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Did you say "London West"?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I did. Windsor West. My apologies.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Close. Very close. Thank you, Speaker.

I would like to welcome Paul Elliott, the president of OSSTF.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like Queen's Park to give a warm welcome to the president of the Ontario firefighters' association, Mr. Carmen Santoro.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome. Further introductions?

We also have with us in the House today four interns from Quebec as part of the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant foundation internship program. They're here with the OLIP interns. We welcome them to Queen's Park to learn about the Legislature.

Also, we have with us in the Speaker's gallery today the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands at Toronto, Mr. Anne van Leeuwen, and his wife, Mrs. Ivon Kemper. They're here for the Dutch Heritage Month—

*Applause.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I did have a few more words to say. They're here with us for the Dutch Heritage Month flag-raising ceremony that will be held after question period out in the front.

I would also remind members that 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands by Canadian troops during the Second World War. The bonds between our countries are very deep and heartfelt.

Again, we want to thank you for being here and showing your support and friendship with Canada. Thank you.

Further introductions.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is to introduce you to my beautiful daughter up there in the gallery. That's Jill. She's the mother of page Madison, and Madison's my beautiful granddaughter, right over there. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. We welcome all our guests.

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday the Premier said she was "obviously encouraged" by ETFO's decision to start work-to-rule rather than a full strike. Well, that encouragement lasted exactly two hours yesterday. So much for the Premier lighting a fire under the negotiations.

With no settlement in sight, parents have a real fear that a full-blown strike is just around the corner. Parents don't deserve the anxiety that this uncertainty brings. They need to be able to make daycare plans for their young children.

Premier, the children and the parents of this province are being caught in the crossfire of your failed negotiations. Get this deal done and end this uncertainty for Ontario's mums and dads. Will you do that?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** First of all, let me just welcome the reps who are in the gallery today. I appreciate you being here. I appreciate you monitoring what goes on in this House.

For many years we have worked together and it's why I have faith in the collective bargaining process. I know that it can work. It takes time. It's true, it does take time, and sometimes it can be frustrating for all sides. But the fact is, it is the best process that we have to come to a fair and equitable settlement, but it has to happen at the table.

I would just remind the member opposite that the starting point for their party was firing over 20,000 education workers, and that's just not who we are. It would not have been good for the system.

What we are doing is, we are working through a collective bargaining process and we need to let that play out.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is also to the Premier. It's another day with no progress; another morning that there are 817,000 elementary school students impacted by the withdrawal of administrative duties by ETFO.

The government's two-tiered system is a wreck. It has been an utter failure. You blame all the issues on the local boards, yet the boards have no room to bargain. But even if a local board and union do reach an agreement, it's all for naught, since a central agreement must be achieved. This is something that can't happen when no one is at the table.

Premier, will you fire your Minister of Education and take steps to seriously get negotiations started again?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** No, I will not do that, because I know that our Minister of Education understands fundamentally how important it is to let the discussion take place between the partners. Sometimes there are stops and starts in that, but fundamentally the collective bargaining process has to unfold at the table.

Look, I'm not happy that kids are out of school. Teachers and support staff are not happy that they're out of school. I understand that. They understand that. We all want kids back in school and we want the teachers and the support staff back in school, and I know that's where they want to be.

When I was in Sudbury, I talked to teachers who were out on the sidewalk and we talked about the fact that they want to be back in the classroom. I understand that. They understand that. The kids want to be back.

1040

We have to let the collective bargaining process take its course. We need to have that deal at the table, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to do everything in our power to make sure that that happens.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the Premier: Premier, you're a former Minister of Education and you're also a former school trustee, and the Minister of Education is a former school trustee.

The Premier knows that there are students who are enrolled in sciences, mathematics and courses that prepare them for college or university. She knows that they're being put at a serious disadvantage for almost four weeks now while other graduating students are in the classrooms getting the education that they deserve.

This failure of a system that you put in place has dragged on long enough. Central bargaining must take place before boards begin to work. The strike has dragged on long enough.

Premier, how can you let your dithering Minister of Education ruin the school year for so many students?

How can you let your dithering Minister of Education continue in her post?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** We share your concern about students being out of school, and the ones in Durham have obviously been out for quite a long time now and we absolutely share that concern. We've certainly been in close contact with the colleges, with the universities and with the application centres. At this point the application process for college and university is occurring as it should, but we are very concerned with that gap in the coursework.

We know for the students who are going on to college and university next year that there is a gap in the course content, and I would encourage students in those boards to go to their board website and find some of the web-based material that is there for them to keep working, because sooner or later this will end. We will get kids back—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. A final reminder to the minister: When I stand, you sit.

New question.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, on countless occasions we have asked you questions about the consequences of your reckless hydro policies. We have told you about constituents who are in the most desperate situations because the cost of energy is rising much faster than their ability to pay. Unfortunately for them, you and your Premier seem unwilling to listen or do not care.

As of the first of this month, they're paying 16.1 cents a kilowatt hour, plus all the extras you slap on for on-peak electricity. When your government took office, they were paying less than a third of that.

Minister, we asked you to include this in your budget; you refused. We'll ask you again: Will you enact a consumers-first energy plan that protects Ontario's hydro users from future skyrocketing increases?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm pleased to answer, and I was particularly pleased to hear yesterday from the new leader of the PT Party, Patrick Brown. He appears to be coming from the Brown field of public policy, because he stood here, five feet away from me—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Speaker: There is no Tea Party.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Arrogance.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke will come to order. I am going to ask all members to use temperate language with

the avoidance of inflaming the House, which is what is not supposed to be done. And that goes for all sides.

Minister, I would like to tell you specifically that it was not helpful.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

The new Leader of the Opposition stood in this House and said that the salvation for electricity rates in Ontario is broad expansion of hydro power in the province of Ontario, not knowing that the capacity for expanding hydro is very, very limited in the province. To the extent it could be expanded, we put \$2.6 billion into expanding the Lower Mattagami facility, generating jobs and more hydro power—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton will come to order.

Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The minister would rather be smarmy than just answer the questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I believe I just explained why I thought that temperate language would be helpful in this place.

Please finish.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Minister, we will continue to ask these questions over and over again until you start giving satisfactory responses. Your MPPs hear the same sad stories that we do. You are not unaware of this problem.

Your “always blame the Tories” strategy on the energy file is simply not working. Ratepayers of this province place responsibility for this disaster squarely on your shoulders.

We know that there's no way you can undo the damage you've already inflicted. For you, the first step is to stop inflicting more. Minister, will you reverse the skyrocketing hydro trends and stop inflicting additional pain on our economy and its citizens?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** In addition to the ridiculous possibility of massive expansion of hydro, which is not possible in Ontario, that shows the lack of knowledge—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Oh, for the love of God, Bob.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton—second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —a massive lack of knowledge of the electricity system in Ontario, Mr. Speaker.

If you look at the PC Party, their policy is to massively expand new nuclear in Ontario, which would cost \$50 billion—\$15 billion onto the electricity rates, which this province cannot afford.

We have taken very significant steps to push the costs down, and in the next supplementary, I will address hydro rates in the province of Ontario from this government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That \$50 billion is a great number, because that's what your global adjustment has already cost Ontarians.



Minister, there's going to be a significant hydro protest tomorrow here at Queen's Park. People from all across the province are coming here to send you and your government a clear message that they cannot afford electricity because of your disastrous policies, like the Green Energy Act. These citizens are here on their own time and their own dime, to tell you in no uncertain terms about the pain that you've inflicted on them. They're hoping that logic and compassion will take you off your current road to disaster.

Minister, can we have your assurances that you will meet with them tomorrow and, for once in your life, actually listen to what's being said?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, according to the National Energy Board, we are projecting 2.2% annual increases over the next 18 years—that's from the National Energy Board—compared to Alberta at 3.2%, BC at 2.8%, New Brunswick at 2.4% and Nova Scotia at 2.8%.

Ontario industrial rates also compare very favourably with other jurisdictions. Industrial rates in northern Ontario are among the lowest in Canada—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My God, with that good news, people must just be laughing through Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Debates are two-way, Mr. Speaker, and apparently the critic for the opposition wants a one-way debate. He doesn't want to listen; he just wants to talk. If he'd listen, he'd know that in Canada, we have the lowest rates. In northern Ontario, they're lower than in 45 American states. Industrial rates in—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I'll finish with this: Industrial rates in southern Ontario are lower than in Michigan, Wisconsin and New Jersey and in line with states like Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Minnesota.

We have extensive programs to mitigate rates in the industrial and business sectors.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier says she's proud of her plan to sell Hydro One, but she's shutting down debate and locking down committee testimony to only four days—and only in Toronto.

If the Premier is so proud of her plan, why doesn't she let people have a say?

1050

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, as I have said a number of times, Mr. Speaker, we are putting in place six

days of consultation on the budget: four days of delegations and two days of clause-by-clause, which up until yesterday was part of the committee process, but apparently the third party has decided that it's not.

I'm proud of the budget that we have put forward to the people of Ontario. I'm proud of the fact that we are investing in the current economy of this province by investing in infrastructure and creating 26,000 jobs a year, by building roads, bridges and transit, inside the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and across the whole province. I'm proud of the fact that we're investing in people's talent and skills and expanding opportunity for young people who are looking for jobs. That's what our budget does. That's what I'm proud of, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, the Premier says she's proud of her plan to sell off Hydro One, but she can't even seem to say the word "sell." Yesterday, the Liberals talked about "broadening ownership" five times. They talked about maximizing. She has talked about reviewing. She has even talked about looking at assets.

Is the Premier using every word except "sell" because she knows she has made the wrong decision and Ontarians don't want to pay the price for her sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Speaker, this is a laughable line of questioning. I have said that we're engaged in a partial sale of Hydro One. I've said that in this House, I've said it publicly, and I say it again. The leader of the third party has the clip that she's looking for. There you go. She can do what she chooses with it.

I'm proud of the fact that we are making investments in this province, that our budget is about building this province up, that our budget is about addressing the needs of people in their day-to-day lives. We know that people are caught in congestion, that people are living in communities and running businesses that need infrastructure investment that municipalities alone cannot achieve. They need a provincial partner in order to be able to make those investments. They need a provincial partner in order to be able to change the way their economies can thrive. Those investments are necessary, Mr. Speaker. That's what I'm proud of. That's what our budget delivers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Do you know what, Speaker? I remember when this Premier used to talk about openness and transparency. Transparency would mean actually running on the plan that you intend to implement after you get elected. That would be transparency. Openness would mean letting people have their say when you decide to go on a different track once you're elected—as opposed to what you say during an election campaign.

Ontarians see what this Premier is doing. They didn't vote to privatize Hydro One, but the Premier is selling it anyway. What's worse, she's trying to shut people out of the process on something that they should have a voice on from one end of this province to the other.

What I don't understand is how this Premier so completely lost her way.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have to say to the leader of the third party that the plan that we ran on included a review of the public assets that are owned by the people of Ontario. She knows that, Mr. Speaker, because she started criticizing us as soon as we said that. She's on record criticizing us for reviewing the assets from the moment that we said we were going to do it, even though she ran on exactly the same fiscal assumptions.

The fact is, we said we were going to review the assets of the province, but most importantly, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek probably didn't hear me. I'm now asking him to come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We said we were going to invest in infrastructure. We said we were going to invest in people's talent and skills. We said we were going to work with business and create a dynamic business environment. We said we were going to create an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

If the leader of the third party had one scintilla of a plan, if she had one iota of a vision of how to do those things—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

New question.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier, Speaker. The Liberals actually used to be straightforward about selling Hydro One. In 2002, Dalton McGuinty called the sale of Hydro One “a disaster for consumers.”

I want to read a passage from the Niagara Falls Review from May 7, 2002: “The privatization of Hydro One will further exacerbate already underfunded school board budgets,” the then president of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and current Minister of Education told a government hearing.

It is 2015, and everything old is new again. Schools are underfunded, and the government wants to privatize Hydro One. It was bad for schools then, and it is bad for schools today.

The Premier, who won her seat fighting against privatizing Hydro One, is suddenly all about privatizing Hydro One. And most importantly, 30,000 Ontarians have actually sent the Liberals a message that they don't want her to sell Hydro One—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Education is going to want to comment. But let me just once again make it clear that what we ran on was investment in this province. We said that we were going to

invest in the roads and bridges and transit that are desperately needed in this province.

We said we were going to build up the economy by working with municipalities and by working with businesses, to partner with them, to allow them to expand—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** And we said we were going to invest in people's talent and skills and provide opportunity for young people to get work experience as part of their education. We are doing all of those things.

The leader of the third party has no plan to make those investments. She has no plan to build up this economy, and she has no plan specifically to build infrastructure.

We are doing that, Mr. Speaker. It's our commitment, and we are following through.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This is my second, Speaker. This is part two.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sorry. Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Back to the Premier: People didn't vote to sell Hydro One, and it leaves them paying the price, regardless of the fact that they didn't vote for it. It cuts hundreds of millions of dollars in long-term, stable revenue that we could invest, and the money isn't going where the Premier claims it's supposed to go. It kills jobs and it hurts families, but it will help out a few bankers. Congratulations. It's going to help out some consultants and some of your Liberal friends. Congratulations.

Why is the Premier more interested in helping out bankers than she is in helping out the people of Ontario, the people who own Hydro One?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I am interested in is building rapid transit in Hamilton. I'm interested in building roads in northern Ontario. I'm interested in building the infrastructure that the Ring of Fire needs in order to be opened up. I'm interested in changing the patterns of congestion on the roads in our—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek and the Minister of Transportation—second time for both.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm interested in alleviating the congestion on our roads that is costing us billions of dollars a year in economic activity and productivity.

I would suggest that any member of this House should be interested in those very same things, because those are the things that are holding us back as an economy, and those are the things that we need to change.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What's shameful, Speaker, is that the Premier was not interested in being upfront with



the people of this province when she ran her election campaign.

Hydro One is owned by the people of Ontario. They did not vote to sell it. As owners, they deserve their say, even if what they say is that they don't want higher bills, they don't want lost revenues for the province, they don't want loss of control.

The Liberals used to believe that selling Hydro One was a disaster for people and bad for schools, but they've lost track of what matters to Ontarians.

Will the Premier stop listening to bankers and consultants and actually start listening to Ontarians who don't want to pay the bill for her sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes, thank you. I want to tell them what I believe in. I believe that we have to fully fund our schools.

1100

Let's put this in context. In 2002, the official opposition was the government, and they had—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** They had received a report that said the education system in Ontario—their consultants said, in agreement with the Ontario public school boards—wait for it—that there was a \$1-billion gap between what schools needed and what they provided. Do you know, Speaker, what we've added? We've added \$8.1 billion, and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, you're done. Order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Through the Chair, please.

New question.

## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

This morning, the Legislature will be asked to vote on your general budgetary policy, but as we've exposed, there is nothing more here than a shell game. You're pretending there's new money for transit when there isn't. That plan was already announced in last year's budget. So this new money you plan to siphon out of the Hydro One sale isn't actually going to fund transit. It's going to feed your spending addiction and create an illusion that you're reducing the deficit.

Premier, if Quebec can balance their budget and have low hydro rates, why can't you?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we are investing in infrastructure, we are investing in public transit, and we're doing so by maximizing the use of our other crown

corporations and reinvesting those funds, dollar for dollar, in a Trillium Trust, to reinvest in our economy, invest in our people and invest in infrastructure that's going to enable us to be more competitive. That is very clearly stated in our budget, it's clearly stated in the way we're going to come to balance by 2017-18, and it clearly states that we're exceeding our targets year over year.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario had the lowest-cost government in Canada because of the steps that we've taken to enable us to be competitive, and we're succeeding ahead of every other province and every other government in Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, yesterday you moved to limit budget debate, to only have hearings in the city of Toronto. We understand why you don't want to take your budget to the rest of Ontario. That would mean you would have to face Jennifer in Ottawa, who told our pre-budget hearings that she has to turn her hydro off from 6 o'clock every morning until noon, and again from 3 every afternoon until 7, just to pay her bill—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Transportation is warned.

Please finish.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I realize they find this funny, Speaker, but Jennifer has to decide between food or fuel, between to heat or eat.

You'll have to face Julie Allen, who told the committee that the digital media tax credit you're gutting is the lifeblood of their sector.

Premier, will you commit to hearings outside of Toronto and face the consequences your bungled budget policies have on all of the people of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** This budget of 2015, as well as the budget of 2014, had the greatest amount of consultations of any other report that we've put forward in this House. We have criss-crossed the province—the Minister of Finance, as well as the very members from the standing committee on finance—and we'll continue to do so.

In fact, we have now put forward six days, more than any of the opposition members have ever put forward in the past. We are deliberating over this budget. We're deliberating over this bill. The people of Ontario have had many opportunities to discuss it, and we continue to listen to them.

In fact, what are they saying? They want us to invest in the economy. They want us to invest in jobs. They want us to invest in opportunities for them to succeed. That is what this budget is all about: to enable us to be more prosperous, more competitive and enable a better future for our families.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Selling Hydro One is another bad decision by the Liberals. Dr. Douglas Peters, a former chief economist at

TD Bank and secretary of state for financial institutions, has written a report together with Dr. David Peters that shows that “selling 15% of Hydro One instead of borrowing for infrastructure investment will actually result in a net loss to the public of \$84.7 million a year.” Further, selling 60% could actually cost \$338 million per year.

Why is the Premier planning to throw away \$338 million a year?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, as the budget indicated, we're proceeding with an IPO which will generate \$9 billion in proceeds; \$5 billion will be applied to debt, and \$4 billion will be going into the Trillium infrastructure fund.

What's important is that the \$4 billion that's going into infrastructure is \$4 billion that's not coming from tax increases, not coming from borrowing, not coming from program cuts.

The NDP have already indicated that they're going to raise taxes in order to pay for the infrastructure. They let that sneak out two or three days ago in the House.

We've got a program that's sensible, that makes sense and has been assessed by economists as being the most prudent way to proceed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The government can't get away from the fact that they're going to throw away \$338 million a year. It's going to hold a fire sale for assets that will give private sector investors a virtually guaranteed 8% return per year. There will be less money for transit, for roads and for bridges.

Will the Premier pull the plug on the sale of Hydro One?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we said in our budget of 2014 that we are going to assess entrepreneurial assets such as the Beer Store, LCBO and hydro agencies, to repurpose assets to invest in infrastructure.

Talk to any mayor across Canada, let alone across Ontario, and they will tell you their priority ask, their priority need, is infrastructure. It's infrastructure that will go into rapid transit in Hamilton. It will go into rapid transit in Ottawa. It will go into expanding natural gas in rural communities.

It's the right thing to do. It's what the people of this province are asking for, and we're going to deliver.

## PARAPAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, also known as the head cheerleader for the Parapan Am Games.

I know our government has worked hard to make the Parapan Games a catalyst for improving accessibility in Ontario. I recently read a great article about the Are You Ready? Conference that TO2015 held just last week. In

that piece, Mr. Speaker, wheelchair athlete/player Abdi Dini, who won a gold medal at the London Paralympics, talked about how the Parapan Games will be an eye-opening experience for Ontario.

We will be welcoming 2,400 para-athletes and officials to our province, and businesses need to be prepared. At the Are You Ready? Conference, TO2015 informed businesses big and small about how improved accessibility will benefit them. Speaker, this is a great example of why these games are so important.

Will the minister please tell the members of this House about the legacy of the Parapan Am Games?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek is warned.

Minister.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** With 59 days to go before we welcome the world to Ontario, it gives me great pleasure—and thank you for the opportunity to answer this question—to talk about one of the most important legacies of the Parapan Am Games.

As the member mentioned, our government saw the games not only as an opportunity to hold an amazing sporting event but also an opportunity to highlight and promote accessibility here in the province of Ontario.

The athletes' village is a great example of an incredible piece of infrastructure that will be used for future generations to come. Accessibility was a key component in the design of the entire village, with 10% of the units being fully accessible. During the games, para-athletes will make their homes in these units while they eat, sleep and prepare for the events. After the games, these units will be converted into affordable housing units for Ontarians with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, another important component of these games is that we'll have our 23,000 volunteers trained—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer and for the great work that you're doing for accessibility.

1110

I know that you and the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure have regularly spoken to this House about the legacy that these infrastructure projects will leave for our province. These projects are building upon Ontario's reputation as a world leader when it comes to accessibility, and we are soon to be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the passage of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, a groundbreaking commitment to people with disabilities in Ontario.

Would the minister please update the House on how the games' infrastructure projects are helping to make Ontario a more accessible province?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Minister of Economic Development.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As we approach the Parapan Am Games, we must continue to focus on accessibility to



ensure the games' success. That's why all existing sports venues are completely accessible and every new build was designed with accessibility in mind.

It gives me great pleasure to be able to say that the aquatics centre in Scarborough is an incredible example of this. It's one of the most accessible public recreation facilities ever built in North America. For instance, it's home to the world's first full-time, year-round daily training environment for high-performance wheelchair basketball.

The facility also has recovery and regeneration pools that help to treat rehabilitating athletes with a movable floor that can be raised up to the deck level so that wheelchairs can get access.

There's no question these games will be an incredible springboard in our efforts to work towards full accessibility.

### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Norm Miller:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, the Auditor General's report on winter highway maintenance shows that your government weakened the area maintenance contracts in 2009, doing away with MTO best practices and removing layers of oversight. As a result, Ontario's winter roads became more dangerous.

Premier, why did it take six winters of worsening road conditions, deaths on our highways and a special report by the Auditor General to realize that this decision by your government was putting Ontarians in danger?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka for his question today. I understand where he is coming from. I know that he has spoken to me through correspondence in the past about concerns from people in his particular community, which I do understand.

As I've said many times here in the Legislature and also to the media, there were eight recommendations that were contained in the auditor's report. All eight of those recommendations have been accepted by me, accepted by the ministry. I do accept full responsibility for making sure that, going forward, this program continues to provide Ontarians with the level of winter maintenance they expect and that they deserve.

I have also pointed out that in 2013, the Ministry of Transportation conducted an internal review as a result of that review, which took place before the auditor was asked to do her work. We have supplied over 100 new pieces of equipment out on highways both in the north and the south. We've added more oversight and we've added more material as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Again to the Premier: You were transportation minister for a year and a half of those six years since your government changed the area maintenance contracts. To remind you, that was January 2010 to October 2011.

Why did you not heed the warnings that were out there from your own MTO staff, from the OPP, from the general driving public?

Premier, it was obvious to everyone in my riding and across the north that driving conditions were dangerous. Just ask any of the thousands of people who signed my petitions.

So I ask again: Why did it take six years, needless deaths on our highways and finally direction from the Auditor General to get you to do something?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** What I've also pointed out in the opportunities I've had to respond to questions relating to the auditor's report is that also contained in that report was her acknowledgement that over the last 13 years Ontario has been ranked first or second in all of North America for highway safety.

That doesn't mean that our work is done at the Ministry of Transportation. One of the reasons that I've asked the auditor to come back in at the end of next winter season and provide a follow-up report is because I do accept full responsibility for making sure that going forward we have winter maintenance that is expected, a winter maintenance standard that is achieved, the kind of standard that the people of Ontario deserve. In fact, in budget 2015, when the Minister of Finance stood in the House and tabled that budget, there were measures that will help supply additional materials for the coming winter season and additional equipment as well.

I will also be providing an update within 60 days of the auditor's report and I look forward to providing that information publicly.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier marketed herself as the education Premier. She promised not to cut education and to rebuild relationships with education workers. That's clearly not working out so well for her. And yet, yesterday the Minister of Education literally boasted about the fact that her government didn't need to keep its commitment to invest \$250 million in education last year and claimed there were no cuts made to special education. But today, we learned 50 educational assistant jobs are on the chopping block in Bruce-Grey. That's very perplexing.

And it appears the Liberal government doesn't see the value of keeping class sizes manageable.

Well, Ontario families don't see the value of a government that throws our schools into chaos.

With nearly 900,000 students impacted by this government's bad decisions, will the Premier finally reverse her cuts to education and keep her promise to Ontario families?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Once again, \$22.5 billion last year equals \$22.5 billion this year. But let me expand, because what's really interesting—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** One of the things that I find really interesting is the platform they ran on. The platform they ran on in 2014 sort of started with our \$22.5 billion as a base and then said they'd find \$600 million in savings in health and education. I'm guessing that probably their goal was to find about \$250 million in savings during the last fiscal year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** On page 230 of your budget, you boast about spending \$248 million less in a year.

Again, to the Premier: Yesterday, the Minister of Education claimed that our public elementary teachers were at the bargaining table just as they were getting up to leave. The minister also recently said that class size caps were possibly on the central table. It's perplexing that the minister doesn't know what's going on. While the minister fumbles her file and your government continues to cut education, Ontario families are paying the price. With 900,000 students paying the price across Ontario, Liberal cuts and broken promises are throwing our schools into chaos.

Will the Premier finally admit that it's time to reverse her short-sighted cuts to education and keep class sizes manageable?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** In the first place, Ontario has among the lowest class sizes of both elementary and secondary anywhere in Canada.

But let's go back to this \$250 million. That came because enrolment fell. That was one cause. This year, the per pupil funding has gone up because we reinvested those savings. So per pupil funding has gone up.

The other thing was that I saved some money in the administration of my ministry. We also found that school boards had greater savings in reserves than we'd actually expected and that got consolidated into our budget.

There were some boards that we had promised capital funding for child care or for new schools. They didn't spend it last year. They'll spend it some other year but they didn't spend it last year.

I think that those are all perfectly good reasons—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question?

## CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** Ma question s'adresse au ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique. Hier matin, cette Chambre avait le très grand privilège d'entendre s'exprimer le premier ministre du Québec, M. Philippe Couillard. Il s'agit de la 10<sup>e</sup> fois seulement qu'un invité s'adresse à l'Assemblée législative et seulement la troisième fois qu'un premier ministre d'une autre province ou d'un autre territoire a été invité à le faire.

Throughout this address, Premier Couillard spoke about how important it is for Canada that Quebec and Ontario have a strong relationship between them. Togeth-

er, our provinces make up more than half of Canada's population and GDP.

Also in his address, Premier Couillard mentioned the importance of Quebec and Ontario working together to fight climate change and seize the opportunities of a stronger, greener economy.

Est-ce que le ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique peut informer cette Chambre de la façon dont l'Ontario et le Québec collaborent pour lutter contre les changements climatiques?

**1120**

**L'hon. Glen R. Murray:** Merci à mes amis et à la députée d'Ottawa-Orléans. Le leadership de la première ministre Wynne and du premier ministre Couillard est historique. Ce partenariat entre le Québec et l'Ontario est unique. Comme ancien Québécois—j'ai passé ma jeunesse à Montréal. C'était une période de conflit; c'était très difficile.

In my youth I wished, as a young Quebecer, that Ontario and Quebec had the strength in partnership, because it reinforces our federalism. These are the most activist federalist parties ever to lead Quebec and Ontario and the two most activist federalists.

But we're also working on specific things, including the environment. Il y a beaucoup de choses que nous faisons ensemble, par exemple, un protocole d'entente entre le gouvernement du Québec et le gouvernement de l'Ontario concernant les actions concertées sur les changements climatiques.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Response?

**L'hon. Glen R. Murray:** J'ai fini maintenant.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It took me 10 seconds to say that, yes.

Supplementary.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Again, my question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. I am pleased to hear that the governments of Ontario and Quebec have been working closely to tackle climate change and will continue to do so.

Les gouvernements du Québec et de l'Ontario sont fiers du travail qu'ils ont déjà accompli pour lutter contre le changement climatique. L'an dernier, l'Ontario a fermé pour toujours ses centrales électriques à combustion au charbon. Il s'agit de la mesure la plus importante jamais prise en Amérique du Nord pour lutter contre les émissions polluantes des gaz à effet de serre.

Au Québec, un marché du carbone—un système de plafonnement et d'échange—est au centre de la stratégie gouvernementale visant à lutter contre le changement climatique. L'an dernier, le Québec a lié son marché du carbone à celui de la Californie par l'intermédiaire de la Western Climate Initiative, WCI, créant ainsi le plus important marché régional.

Speaker, through you, could the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change inform the House as to why it is so important for Ontario to work with Quebec on the development of our cap-and-trade system?



**L'hon. Glen R. Murray:** Nos efforts à réduire les gaz à effet de serre sont une priorité pour le gouvernement de l'Ontario—elle a raison—parce que pour achever notre objectif, nous avons un grand défi.

Unlike other politicians, we do not want to leave this to our granddaughters to fix. This is something we must fix now. In that effort, l'Ontario et le Québec composent maintenant 62 % de la population et l'économie du Canada. Ensemble, nous sommes assez grands pour changer le marché en Amérique du Nord et créer un marché du carbone assez grand pour changer les dynamiques et les décisions économiques partout dans le continent.

Notre partenariat avec la Californie est aussi important. Avec le Québec, l'Ontario mettra en oeuvre un système de plafonnement et d'échange, et—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Merci. New question.

### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. The test used to initially detect Lyme disease in Ontario is the ELISA test, which Health Canada states can miss up to 62% of early-stage Lyme cases. When that happens, public health refuses to do the Western blot test, which is far more reliable. It costs more, but in the bigger picture, a correct diagnosis will save lives and millions of dollars annually for the health ministry, as we can catch Lyme earlier.

Many are forced to seek medical attention in the United States and pay thousands of dollars out of pocket. One New York doctor alone treats 1,400 Ontario patients with Lyme disease. The status quo is clearly failing Ontarians.

Minister, my question is simply this: Why can't Ontarians with Lyme disease be diagnosed with more accurate testing and treated properly right here at home?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite on the important issue of Lyme disease.

We are, in this province, collaborating with Public Health Ontario. We're following Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada guidelines and working closely with them on a consolidated strategy as well that basically covers the landscape of what we need to do. It focuses on appropriate diagnosis and prevention, first and foremost, but also an awareness of the public and health care providers of this particular disease and also focusing on diagnosis and treatment. In fact, at the provincial level, we have taken steps to introduce an action plan which will be working through Public Health Ontario and engaging stakeholders and experts, including clinical experts on Lyme disease, to update our 2012 strategy on Lyme disease which, again, will cover all those areas that are important and, I know, the issues that are important to the member opposite as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Back to the minister: The status quo does have tragic consequences. A Lyme patient in

my riding, Cheryl Abbate, suffered for years as Ontario's inadequate testing allowed her disease to advance undiagnosed. After her vet discovered Lyme in her dog, she decided to get tested in the United States and was immediately diagnosed. Sadly, the damage was already done and she was forced to retire early.

These tragic stories are all too common. Lyme sufferers have told me that they would be willing to pay for the Western blot test themselves so that the province will finally give them treatment, again, right here at home.

So, Minister, would you be willing to commit today to a thorough review of Lyme testing to ensure that people like Cheryl get the treatment they desperately need?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** To the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I thank the member for the question. As mentioned already, the seriousness of the disease is not lost on anybody on our side of the House. In fact, just one or two weeks ago there was a very significant delegation here representing those who are suffering from Lyme disease and those who are concerned about its prevalence here in the province of Ontario.

What I would say to the member—and he has talked to me about this previously in the context of our provincial parks system and what we can do to be more preventive and proactive in terms of dealing with this issue—is that there are 330 provincial parks in the province of Ontario, but those provincial parks that already have a significant risk and are at risk of a higher exposure to Lyme disease are already being dealt with in a bit of a proactive way, I would say, when it comes to educational materials. They are available to people who are entering into our provincial parks. We're open to any other ideas or opportunities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is to the Premier. Today the Auditor General warned that taxpayer-funded partisan government advertisements could very well see the light of day once again in Ontario. But splashed all over the Liberal Party website, liberal.ca, is a petition that calls on Stephen Harper to immediately end the wasteful spending of Canadian tax dollars on partisan government advertising.

So help me out: Apparently the federal Liberals want to get rid of partisan advertising while we've got a Liberal Premier at Queen's Park working to dispense with the rules for the Liberal Party here.

Can the Premier explain why she thinks partisan advertising is wrong in Ottawa but it's okay for the Liberal Premier of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the President of the Treasury Board.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, not only do we think that spending in Ottawa is wrong; we think it's wrong here to have government-funded, taxpayer-funded parti-

san ads. That's why we were the first jurisdiction in the country—indeed I think the next jurisdiction is in Australia—to have this kind of legislation. We are committed to maintaining the ban on partisan ads. We are strengthening the legislation. We are responding to the request of the Auditor General by expanding the mandate to include things like online advertising and so on.

We are clarifying what “partisan” means, because I think it's important to have clear legislation. We've got 10 years of experience with this now. We're opening up the legislation to broaden the mandate of the Auditor General and at the same time we're clarifying the definition of partisanship.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Again to the Premier: The Auditor General, who consistently is speaking truth to power in this place, thinks differently. Again, it's not just the federal Liberal Party. A recent editorial had this to say:

“In its recent budget the government served notice that it wants to change the law and dilute the Auditor General's authority to veto ads she believes are partisan, rather than simply informative.

“That's a dangerous idea. At present, Ontario's Government Advertising Act is a breath of fresh air.”

Gutting the Government Advertising Act is another wrong choice in a growing list of bad, self-serving decisions by this government. Will the Premier be voting for a plan that lets her spend money on partisan ads just like Stephen Harper?

1130

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We believe that taxpayer-funded ads should not be partisan—not in Ontario and not in Canada.

The federal government has spent over \$100 million advertising the economic action plan, including \$14.8 million after the program had ended. They spent \$2.5 million advertising a jobs program that didn't exist, and \$7 million on ads that were condemned by the Canadian Medical Association, the College of Family Physicians, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener—Waterloo, second time.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —and they're spending an additional \$13.5 million on an ad campaign promoting their budget, which is perfect if you think the rich aren't quite rich enough.

Those ads would be banned in Ontario. We urged the federal government to adopt our legislation; they haven't done it. They should—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## TOBACCO CONTROL

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The last couple of weekends have had some great weather as spring has fully arrived. Many families with young chil-

dren in my riding have been taking advantage of the warmer temperatures and the sunny skies to take their kids to playgrounds or enjoy nice meals on a restaurant patio. Our kids are outdoors being active and participating in recreational sports leagues such as baseball and soccer, or just out having fun playing games.

This is a good time to remind everyone of our government's recent Smoke-Free Ontario amendments because some smokers might think of lighting up a cigarette on a bar or a restaurant patio.

Speaker, through you, can the minister remind the House of the details of how we are further protecting our kids and all Ontarians from second-hand smoke?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to begin by thanking the hard-working member from Brampton—Springdale for the important question. The member is right: Indeed, earlier this year we did prohibit smoking on playgrounds, sport fields and on restaurant and bar patios. We also prohibited tobacco sales on university and college campuses.

While the ban came into effect on January 1 of this year, the fact is it is only now with the warmer weather that people are going to really start noticing. So we want to remind Ontarians that you cannot smoke anymore at playgrounds—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Your own minister is answering.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** —sport fields or on restaurant and bar patios. These changes will not only protect our kids and everyday Ontarians, and allow them to enjoy the outdoors, but equally important, they will also protect bar and restaurant staff from the dangers of second-hand smoke.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Minister, we know that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease and premature death in Ontario; it kills 13,000 people a year. Most recently we have seen in the news how other provinces are trying to tackle the problem of tobacco prevalence. Just last week, Quebec introduced legislation that would ban smoking on bar and restaurant patios.

In a recent national survey, it was found that over four million Canadians still smoked tobacco. It was the lowest national smoking rate ever recorded, but statistically unchanged from the same survey two years ago.

I know the associate minister in charge of wellness is hard at work protecting our youth and Ontarians from the dangers of tobacco use and the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

Speaker, through you, can the minister please update the House on the progress our government has made in protecting Ontarians from the hazardous effects of tobacco use?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Again, thanks to the member for Brampton—Springdale who does such a wonderful job of representing her constituents.

It's true, we are working hard, and Ontario has, in fact, become a national and international leader when it comes



to tobacco control. We have invested over \$354 million for tobacco prevention, cessation and protection, and I'm pleased to say that, partly as a result of our efforts, smoking rates have decreased in Ontario from 24.5% in 2000 to 18.1% in 2013. That is 332,000 fewer smokers; that's 332,000 Ontarians with better health.

Today we have the second-lowest smoking rate in Canada, but that's not good enough. We are going to go forward and drive down smoking rates so that Ontario has the lowest smoking rates in Canada.

### ONTARIO FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRY

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Minister, thanks to the 2015 budget, more full-time jobs are in jeopardy in Ontario. The film and TV industry in our province generates \$1.8 billion a year and creates 31,000 full-time jobs. While other provinces choose to foster this industry to make sure it continues to succeed, your government chose to retroactively cut rates and destabilize the entire film and TV business in Ontario.

Minister, the industry has made a reasonable request that you grandfather the tax rate instead of making it retroactive. Will you commit to this request before your budget decision impacts the industry for years to come?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I want to start by saying that our government is proud of our creative cluster here in the province of Ontario. They do so much to add to our economy and really build our identity here in the province of Ontario.

Ontario is the number one film and television jurisdiction in the entire country. I have to say that we will continue to have the most generous film and television tax credits here of the entire country. Compared to Quebec and compared to British Columbia, our main domestic competitors, Ontario will remain the most competitive jurisdiction in the country.

In addition, with the lower Canadian dollar, it was a great opportunity for us to make an adjustment, because the dollar is so low and it still brings in foreign investment. I'll be able to go into a little bit more detail about how we plan to position these tax credits for growth in the future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Minister, you obviously haven't been talking to the industry, because no other jurisdiction around the world has ever implemented a rate cut without grandfathering in current projects. The industry is calling your plan a complete bait and switch.

The industry budgets and finances projects months in advance, before filming has even begun, but now you've cut their bottom line and, in turn, jeopardized hundreds of jobs. You've claimed that this tax rate cut will save \$10 million this year. The industry says that an additional \$10 million could easily be made by attracting just one more TV production.

Now, overnight, any trust that has been built up over the years has been undone, and the industry is now moving projects that were committed to be filmed in Ontario to other provinces, like British Columbia.

Minister, again, will you commit to grandfathering the changes to the film industry's tax rates so that productions already here will continue?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I want to start by saying this: I think the member opposite realizes that it's this government that established these types of credits and continues to grow these credits in the province of Ontario, to add to our \$22-billion creative industries here in the province of Ontario.

When we talk about the proposed 2015 budget, it's—  
*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It's this government that introduced, in the 2015 proposed budget, a permanent tax credit for our music sector here in the province of Ontario. In 2015-16, we will see \$439 million in tax credits going to support those sectors here in the province of Ontario.

We are proud of our record as Liberals, as a government here, and we will stand by our record to support our creative—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

### SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table a special report from the Auditor General of Ontario entitled *The Government's Proposed Amendments to the Government Advertising Act, 2004*.

### DEFERRED VOTES

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the amendment to an amendment to a motion for allocation of time on Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1139 to 1144.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would all members please take their seats?

On May 11, Mr. Naqvi moved government notice of motion number 21. Mr. Clark then moved an amendment to Mr. Naqvi's motion. Ms. Horwath then moved an amendment to Mr. Clark's amendment as follows:

That everything after "the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and" be deleted and replaced by the following: "That the Standing Committee—

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.

All those in favour of Ms. Horwath's amendment to the amendment please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Natyshak, Taras
Bailey, Robert	Hatfield, Percy	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hillier, Randy	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Sattler, Peggy
Clark, Steve	Hudak, Tim	Scott, Laurie
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia	Singh, Jagmeet
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Fedeli, Victor	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Forster, Cindy	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Paul	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Maihi, Harinder	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	
Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 44; the nays are 55.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the amendment to the amendment lost.

Are the members ready to vote on the amendment to the motion? I heard a no. This item will remain on the Orders and Notices paper to be called at a future time.

#### 2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1149 to 1150.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On April 23, 2015, Mr. Sousa moved, seconded by Ms. Wynne, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Polts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Maihi, Harinder	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	
Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Natyshak, Taras
Bailey, Robert	Hatfield, Percy	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hillier, Randy	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Sattler, Peggy
Clark, Steve	Hudak, Tim	Scott, Laurie
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia	Singh, Jagmeet
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Fedeli, Victor	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Forster, Cindy	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Paul	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 55; the nays are 44.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the motion for allocation of time on Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Same vote? Agreed? Agreed.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 55; the nays are 44.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### VISITORS

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Speaker, with your indulgence: I want to recognize in the east gallery our summer intern,



Mr. Matthew Wilson. I wish that he is going to stay with us for a long time and enjoy his stay.

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** With your indulgence, I'm pleased to welcome four students from Lester B. Pearson High School in Burlington here today for the celebration of Dutch Heritage Month. Please welcome Matt Nishimura, Braeden Smith, Dale Cooper and Sarah Naylor. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just a reminder: The flag-raising for Dutch Heritage Month is outside as soon as question period is over.

There are no further deferred votes.

This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.  
*The House recessed from 1155 to 1500.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to welcome to Queen's Park today, from Parry Sound, Tim West, from the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs. Also from Parry Sound, Andrew Ryeland, whose business is Bear Claw Tours, and he has been the president of the chamber of commerce of Parry Sound as well. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Today is an exciting day. Joining us in the Legislature we have about 25 different organizations that are here to support our government's introduction of proposed legislation to better support our trail systems here in the province of Ontario. I'd like to welcome everyone. There are too many names to go through, but welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have visitors from the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario, also known as MEAO, and people with fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities. This is Laura Cox and, a good friend of mine, Adrianna Tetley. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I would join my friend across the aisle in welcoming the snowmobilers as well. For someone who has 11 machines in one of our large facilities, they are welcome down the Apsley-Chandos-Bancroft way any time.

I would like to welcome the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario, known as MEAO, represented here today by Denise Magi, the vice-president and secretary; Keith Deviney, president; and other MEAO officials and executives being Ted Ball, John Dougherty and Adrianna Tetley.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, just as a reminder to all honourable members, you're invited to a reception being held today and hosted by MEAO in committee room 228 after 4:30 p.m.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I'm happy to introduce, from the Ontario Museum Association, Marie Lalonde and Diane Chaperon-Lor.

I would also like to welcome Larry Ketcheson from Parks and Recreation Ontario.

Welcome to the Legislature.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce you to Charlie Love from the great riding of Kitchener Centre, who sits on my riding association executive. Hi, Charlie.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'm very pleased to rise today to recognize the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario, MEAO being the acronym. They're with us today to mark May 12 as the official awareness day for myalgic encephalomyelitis, fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities, which are chronic, complex, environmentally linked illnesses that afflict over 500,000 people in Ontario.

As I said in my statement last fall, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care received a business case proposal for the Ontario Centre of Excellence in Environmental Health back in 2013. The point of establishing such a centre of excellence is to provide the hundreds of thousands of Ontarians afflicted with these illnesses with the appropriate care and treatment they deserve, which would, in the long run, improve our health care system. To date, the ministry has not given approval to this business case proposal, although it has recognized the business case proposal and announced a task force on environmental health.

As funding for these illnesses is almost non-existent, I urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to get moving on the task force that will deliver a system of care to ensure that effective and appropriate services are given to the hundreds of thousands of Ontario patients who suffer from these chronic, complex and environmentally linked illnesses.

I would like to thank the association for their excellent advocacy work for Ontarians living with myalgic encephalomyelitis and associated illnesses. We look forward to receiving the health minister's update with regard to his approval of this proposal.

### LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** It's an honour to rise today as the NDP critic for labour to speak once again to the countless workers in our province forced to take severe job action because of the Liberal government's austerity cuts, especially in education and health care.

Because of the government's desire to strip collective agreements, to reduce teachers' ability to use their professional judgment, and to remove caps on class sizes, we know that almost a million students and 73,000 teachers were affected by strike action this week.

In my own riding of Welland, members of OPSEU 294 have been on strike since April 10. The CCAC responsible for contracting to the for-profit CarePartners

has not said a peep, nor has the government, about ensuring transparency and accountability for the private agencies these nurses are working for and ensuring quality patient care.

Crown Holdings workers here in Toronto working for one of the largest manufacturers of food and beverage containers have been on strike since September 2013 because of massive concessions demanded of the workers. Crown has refused to negotiate a fair settlement and has instead hired scab replacement workers to prolong the dispute and try to break the strike. The government has announced a special inquiry. When is that going to happen?

I stand in solidarity with these workers across our province—our educators, our nurses and Crown Holdings workers—and urge this government to take the necessary steps to ensure that labour laws are strengthened so workers in this province are treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve.

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DES MUSÉES

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** On Monday, May 18, we will be celebrating International Museum Day. This year's theme is "Museums for a sustainable society."

I want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the Ontario Museum Association, some of whom are at Queen's Park today. This year's theme recognizes the role of museums in raising public awareness, specifically about the need for a society that is less wasteful, more co-operative, and uses resources in a way that respects living systems.

En tant que francophile, je me réjouis de la commémoration de 400 ans de présence francophone en Ontario cet été, une reconnaissance importante du rôle joué par la communauté francophone dans l'histoire et l'avenir de l'Ontario.

The Ontario Museum Association's virtual collection deserves special mention: the 400 collection, collection du 400<sup>e</sup>, featuring artifacts and documents from museums across the province. This collection tells the story of the people, the places and the institutions that make up our francophone heritage.

Tourism, heritage and culture come together in Ontario's museums. They have a significant impact on the social and economic vitality of our province, attracting more than three million national and international visitors to Ontario each year.

Thank you all for preserving our cultural heritage, for telling our stories and for fostering historical understanding. Merci. Meegwetch.

#### EARTHQUAKE IN NEPAL

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm very sorry to have occasion to rise once more to extend condolences to the

people of Nepal and their friends and family around the world. After the devastating earthquake on April 25, which took the lives of over 8,000 people in Nepal and northern India, another strong earthquake shook the region today, resulting in more destruction and dozens of fatalities. This magnitude 7.3 earthquake was followed by at least six strong aftershocks, which were felt as far away as Delhi, the Indian capital, and Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

On behalf of the Ontario PC Party and our leader, Patrick Brown, I extend heartfelt condolences to the Nepalese and Indian communities in Ontario and all those who have been affected by this terrible tragedy.

Thousands of people living in that region are sleeping outside tonight, afraid to return to their homes for fear they will collapse, and workers are renewing their courageous efforts to rescue survivors, help the injured, and distribute aid to families who have been left with nothing. It's really devastation beyond what we can imagine here in Ontario.

I think we are all deeply saddened that people who have already endured so much should be faced with further tragedy. They will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

#### RIDING OF WINDSOR-TECUMSEH

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Good afternoon, Speaker. Here's the latest newscast from the Windsor area.

Pardon the pun, but it is a change of habit: The Ursuline Sisters have donated \$300,000 to the Windsor Symphony Orchestra. The nuns founded a music school in Windsor back in 1915. The Ursuline order shifted their focus to social work more than 20 years ago. The money, meant to honour the nuns who taught at the music school, will go into the symphony's permanent endowment fund. Last month, the Toldo Foundation put half a million into that fund; it was matched by the federal government. So, Maestro, play on.

1510

Speaker, as you know, the Ontario government is cutting back on the money available for Hollywood productions, but Hollywood was in Windsor last weekend for the DVD launch of the locally shot film *The Birder*. A portion of the proceeds for the evening will go to the Ojibway Nature Centre. The film is a revenge comedy that tells the tale of a rivalry for the job of head of ornithology at a local park. Here at Queen's Park, Speaker, as you sit there on your perch, keep an eye on the strange birds on the other side of the aisle who like to ruffle your feathers from time to time.

Here's a shout-out to paramedics Tricia Rousseau and Chris Kirwan. They won first place in the advanced care division at the annual National Paramedic Competition held in Durham recently. They were graded on how well they handled emergencies such as earthquakes and a patient with no vital signs, which from time to time, for short periods, we could use around here.

That's the news, Speaker. Back to you on the anchor desk.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will editorialize that there are members on all sides who ruffle my feathers.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today and tell you about a great day I had with friends, family and neighbours recently as we worked together to give Halton a little spring cleaning. It was a wonderful day of planting trees, digging gardens, raking leaves and picking up litter. Hundreds of people came out to do their part to get Halton green.

It was energizing to see so many people come out to participate in Milton's Good Neighbours Community Day, Halton Eco Festival and Conservation Halton's Trees for Watershed Health.

It was great to see first-hand Halton residents come out to keep our communities green and beautiful. Friends and neighbours came out and pitched in to make sure we protect Halton's natural beauty. It's a reminder of the great things we can accomplish when we all work together. It also allows us to take a step back from our busy lives and gain an appreciation of the fragile relationship we have with our environment. Our region is growing quickly, but Halton residents are committed to keeping our natural beauty intact.

When people come together like this, it makes communities stronger, it brings neighbours closer and it helps us all to build a better future for everyone. We all have a responsibility to preserve and protect Ontario's natural beauty. That's why days like this are so important. I look forward to doing it all again next year.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to start my statement today with a quote from Dr. Ved Tandan of the Ontario Medical Association: "The provincial government's new cuts will drive new physicians out of Ontario and hurt patient care.... family physicians are being barred from joining team-based models of care like family health teams in the community of their choice. Such team-based practices are the model students and residents ... are being trained in and the model that will allow them to provide best quality of care."

"More than 500 family medicine residents are set to graduate in Ontario this June and their plans to join a family health team or network are now 'in limbo.'"

The fact is, Ontario is failing doctors and especially failing patients in new and alarming ways in rural Ontario. This government has placed new restrictions on doctors who are recent graduates from joining family health teams. Family health teams have been a key tool in improving health care delivery in the province.

Last week, Hastings county council supported a resolution by the OMA to oppose this change and allow new doctors to join family health teams. As Hastings county warden Rick Phillips stated, "You should be

encouraging stuff. You shouldn't be eliminating things," when it comes to health care delivery in Ontario.

The problem this government has right now is that it's seeing debt start to grow at such a rate that it can't afford to provide the services that Ontarians need. It's now cutting corners and hurting those services. We need to support our family health teams, we need to provide those opportunities for new doctors and we need to make decisions to protect health care in this province.

#### MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** It's my pleasure to speak on behalf of international awareness day for myalgic encephalomyelitis, fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities.

I'm very pleased, once again this year, to sponsor the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario—MEAO is the acronym—which is here today to mark May 12 as the official awareness day for myalgic encephalomyelitis, fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities, which are three chronic, complex and environmentally linked illnesses which afflict over 560,000 Ontarians.

I've had the pleasuring of sponsoring this association many times over the last several years for their extremely worthy cause. MEAO supports the hundreds of thousands of patients in Ontario who have complex, chronic, environmentally linked illnesses.

As was pointed out numerous times over the years, these patients experience systemic barriers to getting the health care they need because diagnosis and treatment of these very serious conditions are seriously lacking in Ontario.

A year and a half ago, MEAO, together with the Association of Ontario Health Centres, submitted a business case proposal for the Ontario Centre of Excellence in Environmental Health to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The important part is that the ministry and the Premier have given recognition to the business case proposal and announced a task force on environmental health.

We urge the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to move quickly to implement the task force that has—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sure you will.

#### OMNI PROGRAMS

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I rise today with a heavy heart because OMNI News, the little engine that could, has been derailed. Allow me to explain.

Last Thursday, Rogers Media announced that OMNI TV's three remaining daily, locally produced language newscasts and all its diversity programming were immediately and permanently cancelled. Viewers were not informed.

Ted Rogers, a Canadian media pioneer, whom I had the privilege of working with at OMNI, would have been shocked and appalled to hear that his little engine that could—that's what he nicknamed OMNI, because of its success—was being effectively dismantled.

In 1986, he had the foresight to buy CFMT, which later became OMNI, from its founder, Dan Iannuzzi. Ted knew that Canada's increasing multicultural population would need to access information in their own language to integrate well, grow and contribute to Canada.

Under Ted's tutelage and funding, OMNI thrived and grew to broadcast in 32 different languages and produce five daily language local newscasts. The working model which he championed and nourished, notwithstanding the naysayers, became a content-driven, profitable media operation.

Ted died in 2008, and since then, OMNI programs and budgets were dramatically cut in 2012 and 2013—and now Thursday's final blow.

Mr. Speaker, in light of this announcement, I invite all concerned, in all communities, to come together and let it be known that we object to the dismantling of the little engine that could. We all came to Canada from somewhere else. It helps us belong. Access to information in third languages is an essential part of our multicultural—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I thank all members for their statements.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated May 12, 2015, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I beg leave to present a report on Ontario Power Generation human resources from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a short statement?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, the committee extends its appreciation to the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, the Clerk of the Committee and the staff of legislative research for their assistance during the hearings and report-writing deliberations.

I would also like to extend thanks to the permanent members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and the two permanent substitutes for this investigation, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and the member from Toronto–Danforth.

I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Hardeman moves the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### SUPPORTING ONTARIO'S TRAILS ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LE SOUTIEN AUX SENTIERS DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Coteau moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to enact the Ontario Trails Act, 2015 and to amend various Acts/ Projet de loi 100, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur les sentiers de l'Ontario et modifiant diverses lois.

1520

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I suppose so.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carried. It must be carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** The proposed legislation being introduced today would, if passed, enact the Ontario Trails Act, 2015. The proposed legislation would, among other things, proclaim an annual trails week, allow for the establishment of voluntary best practices, a voluntary trails classification system and targets, and for the recognition of trails of distinction. It would require that a trails strategy be maintained and reviewed periodically, and set out a mechanism for trail easement.

If passed, supporting provisions would include amendments to the Occupiers' Liability Act, the Public Lands Act, the Trespass to Property Act and other complementary amendments.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the stakeholders joining us here today and ministry staff for their great work in putting this proposed legislation together. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I move to motions, I want to also remind everyone that when you introduce a bill you should only be reading from the explanatory notes. Debate takes place later. I thank you for following that.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The members know something about heckling, too.



## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### POLICE WEEK

#### SEMAINE DE LA POLICE

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Police Week is an annual event dedicated to recognizing and building awareness of police services in our local communities. This year, May 10 to 16 is Police Week. It is observed each year in May to coincide with Peace Officers Memorial Day, recognized internationally on May 15. It is also a week to celebrate the steps we are taking together to make our province even safer.

It is a great privilege for me to rise in this House today to express, on behalf of our Premier, Kathleen Wynne, our government and the people of Ontario, our gratitude to the brave police officers who serve us and keep our communities safe. Our province is safer and our communities are stronger because of the excellent work our police services do day in and day out. Our government is proud of the partnership we have built with our police services, one that we will continue to strengthen and support.

L'excellent travail accompli jour après jour par nos services policiers rend nos collectivités plus sûres et plus fortes. Notre gouvernement est fier du solide partenariat que nous avons établi avec nos services policiers, un partenariat que nous entendons bien continuer de renforcer et d'appuyer.

We have seen the results. Ontario is now one of the safest jurisdictions in North America. Since 2003, Ontario's crime rate has dropped by 36% and Ontario's violent crime rate dropped by 27%. In fact, Ontario has had the lowest crime rate of any province and territory every year since 2004. En fait, l'Ontario a eu le taux de criminalité le plus bas de toutes les provinces et de tous les territoires du pays chaque année depuis 2004. For that and everything they do, we owe them our deepest gratitude.

The theme for Police Week this year is "Discover Policing." Police services across the province will be promoting the profession of policing to the communities they serve by showcasing the diversity of options a career in policing provides and encouraging the public to learn more about this career choice.

I encourage all members of the House to give this week their full support.

Sir Robert Peel, the founder of modern policing, is quoted as saying, "The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

That point of view is at the heart of the government's efforts to develop a Strategy for a Safer Ontario. Ontario and its police services have worked hard to make our communities safe. Speaker, now we must work smarter to make our communities safer.

L'Ontario et ses services policiers n'ont pas ménagé leurs efforts pour assurer la sécurité de nos collectivités. Maintenant, nous devons travailler de manière plus intelligente pour rendre nos collectivités plus sûres.

Building on three years of work with the Future of Policing Advisory Committee, Ontario's Strategy for a Safer Ontario is about finding smarter and better ways to do things and using evidence and experience to improve outcomes. We will focus on collaborative partnerships that include police and other sectors such as education, health care and social services to make our communities safer. We have travelled to many communities across the province to learn from Ontario's diverse makeup of urban, rural, remote and aboriginal communities in this effort. This exercise has reinforced the notion that we all have a role to play in making our communities safe, secure and healthy, so we are building partnerships among all human service providers in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I want to especially recognize and thank those police officers who work tirelessly in their communities, reaching out to volunteer and community groups, to schools and hospitals, to churches, temples, mosques and synagogues. And thank you to all those members of the public who respond to the need to work in partnership for community safety and well-being.

Nous voulons remercier aujourd'hui les agentes et agents de police qui travaillent avec ardeur dans nos collectivités, par exemple en établissant des liens avec les groupes bénévoles et communautaires, les écoles, les hôpitaux, les églises, les temples, les mosquées et les synagogues. Nous remercions aussi tous les gens qui, dans le public, répondent au besoin d'établir des partenariats en vue d'assurer la sécurité et le bien-être de la collectivité.

As we celebrate Police Week and pay tribute to police officers all across the province, let us also recognize the thousands of men and women whose work helps make our communities safer.

As part of the Police Week activities, police services will be showcasing successful partnerships within the community and inviting the public to share in these activities. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services will also be featuring profiles of police officers from across the province that are using their experiences, their diversity and their skills to go above and beyond in their duties to make our communities safer. A new story will be published each day throughout Police Week on the ministry's website.

Speaker, I'm sure we all collectively have stories about police officers, and maybe the roles in their families. As many members may have heard, my grandfather, my father's father, was a police officer in India as well, so I feel a special connection to everything that our police officers do in our respective communities.

I urge all members of this House to participate in your community and pay tribute to local police officers and local organizations that work so effectively to enhance community safety and well-being.

J'invite tous les membres de l'Assemblée législative à prendre part à ces activités dans leurs collectivités et à

rendre hommage aux agentes et agents de police, ainsi qu'aux organismes communautaires, qui, à l'échelon local, s'emploient avec une efficacité remarquable à améliorer le bien-être et la sécurité dans la collectivité.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

1530

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Since 1970, Police Week has been observed in May to coincide with Peace Officers Memorial Day, recognized internationally on May 15. This year, Ontario is celebrating Police Week from May 10 to 16.

Speaker, Police Week is governed by four specific objectives. The first one is to strengthen police ties with the community. Second, it's to honour police officers for the public safety and security that they provide to their communities. Third, it's to promote the work police do in their communities. Fourth, it's to inform the community about the police role in public safety and security.

Today we remember the sacrifice made by Constable Charles Hefferon. Charles lost his life 83 years ago today while serving the OPP following a collision with a car while on a motorcycle patrol. His death was especially tragic given that he had served in and survived both the Boer War and World War I. He was truly dedicated to protecting the citizens of this province and of this country. Charles was also a tremendous athlete, having finished fourth in the five-mile race at the 1908 Olympics. He was only 55 years old.

The theme of Police Week 2015 is "Discover Policing." People around the province are invited to come and discover the many ways that police services and their people are working to keep our communities safe, as well as consider a rewarding career in policing. Policing offers incredible growth opportunities, specialized training, continued learning and, perhaps most of all, a strong sense of satisfaction for helping make your community—our community—a safer place. Policing is not a job; it's a calling. It's a calling answered by brave and passionate men and women who take on risks that many cannot bear.

In my role as MPP, I have been fortunate enough to go on a few ride-alongs with the local Chatham police officers as well as OPP officers. During these ride-alongs, I discovered just how hard these men and women in our police services work. I witnessed the care and passion that they have for their communities. I also discovered that they face numerous challenges that make their jobs more difficult and dangerous to perform.

Chatham-Kent OPP detachments have been personally touched by the tragedy of having lost two officers, Senior Constable James McFadden and Sergeant Marg Eve, who died from serious injuries suffered after being hit by vehicles in the line of duty on the 401.

While it is impossible to eliminate all of the risks that police officers potentially face, it is the government's duty to constantly strive to minimize the risks faced by these men and women. We've come a long way during Ontario's history as it pertains to improving workplace

conditions for police officers, and I consider travelling the corridor of 401 a workplace.

One of the examples that has really been promoted well, I think, is this public awareness of the "move over" law. Every time we see flashing lights, we are encouraged to move over—actually, if we don't, we'll get ticketed—so that we do not get in the way of a police officer attending to either a distressed motorist or a motorist who has perhaps violated the law.

At the same time, modern police officers increasingly find themselves struggling to keep up to a scope of work that seems to be growing by the day. Officers are being asked to take on additional responsibilities that used to be outside of their job description. Police departments are struggling to handle the costs associated with these extra demands.

One key issue for front-line officers as well as chiefs is the strain being put on police services by a lack of mental health resources in Ontario. London police estimate that they handled over 2,000 mental health calls in 2014. Many front-line officers in my own riding have told me that often they believe that these calls could have been better dealt with by the medical community. We must do better when it comes to these particular issues.

In closing, I would actually like to take a moment and pay a special thanks to Chief Dennis Poole for his years of service to the Chatham-Kent Police Service. I would also like to congratulate Chief Gary Conn on his recent unanimous selection as the new police chief for Chatham-Kent. It is clear that you have the confidence of our community, Gary, and I'm sure that you will perform your duties with honour and integrity.

Police Week is a time for us to get feedback on how we can improve policing throughout the province and, most importantly, thank each and every man and woman who dedicates their lives to keeping our community safe. To Ontario police officers and all support staff, thank you for all that you have done, and thank you for all that you continue to do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further responses?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I am honoured to have the opportunity to rise in the Legislature this afternoon in honour of Police Week in Ontario and in recognition of the work that police officers do to keep our communities safe. Though we are grateful year-round for the service police officers provide each and every day, during Police Week we have the opportunity to celebrate their role and pay tribute to their sacrifice and service.

I grew up in a family with both of my uncles serving their communities as police officers. One of my uncles committed years to the Torch Run in support of the Special Olympics—

*Applause.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Yes. This is a great example of the variety of ways that police serve our communities.

My other uncle started his career with the RCMP up north in Atikokan.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm so glad you're here.



He worked for the OPP and was a sergeant and, later, chief of police.

Both of my uncles, like many officers across the province, served to strengthen their communities, and today we thank them.

As first responders, police risk their lives to protect ours, and in return we thank them sincerely. But as representatives of this province, we have a duty to give more than just thanks. We have a duty to do everything in our power to ensure that the people who keep us safe are kept safe as well. Police officers have a dangerous job, but there are things that we can do to ensure that those dangers are kept to an absolute minimum. As the world changes, we need to ensure that we change with it and that our policies continue to evolve and adapt.

Because our police officers are first responders and front-line workers, they also become the first point of contact for a variety of concerns such as mental health. Traditionally, police serve our communities as law enforcement, but today that scope has expanded vastly. Because of lack of funding and gaps in the system, police have in many ways become social workers as well. As the role of our officers continues to evolve, we need our policies to evolve too. We know our officers are up to the job, but let's make sure that they have our support so they can do that job.

As the role of our officers continues to expand, so does the burden that is placed on their shoulders. Traditionally, we recognize the physical sacrifices made by police in the line of duty. We recognize that officers put themselves in harm's way on a daily basis, but we must also recognize the cumulative effect of that ongoing sacrifice and stress. Mental health is just as important as physical health, and our first responders are constantly exposed to traumatic situations. The fact that our police officers are exposed to such regular mental stress is just as great a sacrifice, so we need to do more to lessen that burden.

My colleague the member from Parkdale–High Park has worked tirelessly to this end, and her private member's bill, Bill 2, would ensure that first responders suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder do not have to jump through hoops to prove that their injury is a result of their work environment. It is an excellent bill and I hope that all members of this Legislature will support its timely passage. As I stated earlier, our first responders risk their lives to protect and defend us. This is our opportunity to protect and defend their well-being.

Speaker, I would be remiss not to mention the incredible work that Durham Regional Police Service does in my riding of Oshawa as well. We live in a safe community, and it is because of the unwavering dedication of officers across Durham region from the Central East target team to Victim Services and beyond. We thank them.

As a teacher in our public school system in Durham, I have seen the role that the police play in our school communities as well. I've seen that officers are often assigned to elementary schools to build relationships with

students in an accessible and approachable way. They are available to speak with, to connect with, and to work with to build positive relationships with students. They present to students on important issues, including bullying and harassment, healthy choices, and safety, especially when it comes to drugs, online activities and bullying. When we think of the work that police do, we often think of what we see on TV or in the movies, but the work that our officers do in the classroom is proof of their true dedication to making our communities a better place to live.

I will finish by saying thank you once again to our police officers for their dedication, their sacrifice and their commitment to our communities.

1540

As the new NDP critic for community safety and correctional services, I look forward to working closely with our police officers, and I hope to foster an open and ongoing dialogue.

This week we recognize their work, but year-round we are grateful for their service.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## PETITIONS

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I was expecting somebody to get up and they didn't, so I'll get up.

I have a petition here that has been given to me by Colleen Mcllwaine from Timmins, and it's got over 1,000 signatures on it. It reads as follows:

"Immediate action.

"We need immediate action to help us keep the orthopedic surgeons and reduce the extended surgery wait time for the huge list of people in Timmins and our extended northern Ontario catchment. We must have funding to make this happen.

"We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our leaders to act now and to reinstate funding for hip and knee replacement."

I can tell you that's a big issue in my riding, and I will affix my signature to that petition.

### PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

**M. Peter Z. Milczyn:** J'ai une pétition à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que les microbilles sont de petites particules de plastique de moins de 1 mm de diamètre, qui passent à travers nos systèmes de filtration de l'eau et sont présentes dans nos rivières et dans les Grands Lacs;

« Attendu que la présence de ces microbilles dans les Grands Lacs augmente et qu'elles contribuent à la pollution par le plastique de nos lacs et rivières d'eau douce;

« Attendu que la recherche scientifique et les données recueillies jusqu'à présent révèlent que les microbilles qui sont présentes dans notre système d'alimentation en eau stockent des toxines, que des organismes confondent ces microbilles avec des aliments et que ces microbilles peuvent se retrouver dans notre chaîne alimentaire;

« Nous, les soussignés, présentons une pétition à l'Assemblée législative aux fins suivantes :

« Mandater le gouvernement de l'Ontario pour qu'il interdise la création et l'ajout de microbilles aux produits cosmétiques et à tous les autres produits de santé et de beauté connexes et demander au ministère de l'Environnement d'effectuer une étude annuelle des Grands Lacs pour analyser les eaux et déceler la présence de microbilles. »

Je donne mon appui à cette pétition, j'y affixe ma signature et je donne la pétition à page Afayah.

#### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Mr. Todd Smith:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I agree with this, will sign it and send it to the table with page Ryan.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** This petition is titled "Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize Hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

It's my pleasure to affix my signature to this petition and give it to page Mira.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition that is addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to sign it and send it to the table with page Colin.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I've got a petition that was signed by a great number of people from around the great riding of Oxford, primarily from the town of Tillsonburg. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and



"Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

"Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

I affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** This petition was presented to me by Mrs. Grace St. Germain from Sault Ste. Marie, who collected several hundred signatures. The petition reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Sault Area Hospital is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of acute care beds and cuts to more than 59,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year from departments across the hospital, including the operating room, the intensive care unit, oncology, surgical, hemodialysis, infection control as well as patient care coordinators, personal support workers and others;

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the proposed cuts to the Sault Area Hospital and protect the beds and services;

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I agree with this petition and present it to page Ashton who will bring it down to the Clerks' table.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** I have a petition in English on an always popular topic.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

1550

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I support this petition, affix my signature to it and hand it to page Madison.

### TAXATION

**Mr. Todd Smith:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

"Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn't necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

"Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

"Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

"Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows..."

I agree with this and will send it to the table.

## GASOLINE PRICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that was collected by Tiffany Benoit from Whitefish in my hometown in my riding.

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario" to:

"Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Colton to bring it to the Clerk.

## WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** The fluoride petitions continue to come in in great numbers. This is addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It's entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water" and it reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of

municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition, and send it down with page Abdullah.

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas northern Ontario will suffer a huge loss of service as a result of government cuts to ServiceOntario counters;

"Whereas these cuts will have a negative impact on local businesses and local economies;

"Whereas northerners will now face challenges in accessing their birth certificates, health cards and licences;

"Whereas northern Ontario should not unfairly bear the brunt of decisions to slash operating budgets;

"Whereas regardless of address, all Ontarians should be treated equally by their government;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Review the decision to cut access to ServiceOntario for northerners, and provide northern Ontarians equal access to these services."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Mira, who will bring it down to the Clerks' table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I'd like to thank all members who contributed to petitions. It was interesting how the fluoride petition took about half of the amount of time allotted for petitions.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## TIME ALLOCATION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** When this matter was last before the House, the leader of the third party had moved an amendment to the amendment, which has since been disposed of. I therefore turn to the government for further debate on the amendment to the motion.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that the amendment to the motion be amended as follows:

—in the second paragraph, striking out the words "Ottawa," "Thunder Bay," "Windsor" and "London" and replacing them with the word "Toronto," and striking out the words "Friday, May 22, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m." and replacing them with the words "Monday, May 25, 2015, from 2 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.";

—striking out the third paragraph entirely;

—in the second bullet of the fourth paragraph, striking out "12 noon" and replacing it with the words "4 p.m.";

—in the fourth bullet of the fourth paragraph, striking out "5 p.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2015" and replacing it with "9:30 a.m. on Friday, May 15, 2015";



—in the fourth paragraph, adding a seventh bullet which reads, “That the deadline for written submissions is 9:45 p.m. on Monday, May 25, 2015”;

—in the fifth paragraph, striking out the words “10 a.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015” and replacing them with the words “10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2015”;

—in the sixth paragraph, striking out everything following “committee be authorized to meet” and replacing it with the words “Thursday, May 28, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Monday, June 1, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and 9:30 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill”;

—in the seventh paragraph, striking out the words “Wednesday, June 3, 2015, at 4 p.m.” and replacing them with the words “Thursday, May 28, 2015, at 4:30 p.m.”; and

—in the eighth paragraph, striking out the words “Thursday, June 4, 2015” and replacing them with the words “Tuesday, June 2, 2015.”

Correction, Mr. Speaker: I meant to say “a.m.” not “p.m.” There was a typo on my copy, by the way.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Yes, you’re right. The member for Belleville recognized it.

So where I say “in the fourth paragraph, adding a seventh bullet which reads, ‘That the deadline for written submissions is 9:45 a.m. on Monday, May 25, 2015’”—it’s a good thing the member for Belleville picked that up for me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Bradley has moved that the amendment to the motion be amended as follows—

**Interjections:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Back to Mr. Bradley for further debate.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m sorry to say that the opposition parties are employing procedural tricks to delay the motion that would schedule six days of committee meetings on the budget bill.

If passed, the budget bill would allow the establishment of the body that will administer the new ORPP, the amendment of the Liquor Control Act to allow the government to bring beer into grocery stores, and the amendment of the Insurance Act to ensure that auto insurance rates continue to decrease.

Unfortunately, in order to prevent the opposition from holding this motion hostage, the government has no choice but to bring a motion to adjourn debate. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed?

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1603 to 1633.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All right, I would ask the members to take their seats, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Again, I’d like the members to take their seats, please.

Mr. Bradley has moved the adjournment of the debate. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 32; the nays are 50.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I declare the motion lost.

Back to Mr. Bradley.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, that was such a wonderful vote that I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1636 to 1706.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I would ask the members to take their seats, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order. Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 37; the nays are 52.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order. I declare the motion lost.

The time allotted to this debate under standing order 47 having expired, I am now required to put the question.

On May 11, Mr. Naqvi moved government notice of motion number 21. Mr. Clark then moved an amendment to Mr. Naqvi’s motion. Mr. Bradley then moved an amendment to Mr. Clark’s amendment as follows:

“I move that the amendment to the motion be amended as follows”—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment to the amendment carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I have received a vote deferral to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the amendment to the amendment to government

notice of motion number 21 be deferred until deferred votes on Wednesday, May 13, 2015.”

*Vote deferred.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 6, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 12, 2015, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Duguid has moved second reading of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

I have just received, from the government whip, a vote deferral to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly: “Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on second reading of Bill 6 be deferred until deferred votes on Wednesday, May 13, 2015.”

*Second reading vote deferred.*

## ONTARIO IMMIGRATION ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'IMMIGRATION EN ONTARIO

Mr. Chan moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 49, Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Chan.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Davenport.

The last time I rose in the House, I talked about this act; it was a few weeks back, and I remember I talked about my own story about immigration. I came here in 1969, and my first job was a job working down in a basement. Somehow, I was able to climb to the ground floor and move forward. After 46 years, I am able to stand in the House today. This is my own immigration story.

Other than the aboriginal people, I think in Canada we all have an immigration story to tell. In Ontario and in

Canada, diversity is really our greatest strength. We have people from Korea, India, Pakistan, the Philippines—you name it. We basically have people from more than 200 countries speaking more than 200 languages.

During my time in the last several years as a cabinet minister, I've had the fortune of meeting many foreign dignitaries. Once in a while they come to me—consuls from other countries or consuls general from other countries or ambassadors from other countries; countries like the UK, the Netherlands, France and others—and they talk to me about something that Ontario and Canada are really able to do very well, which is immigration—immigration of our people—and the integration of the system, which makes us so proud that we are able to co-exist and live in peace and harmony.

In many of those countries they really have a hard time getting their immigration in order. We are good. We are really good at integrating our immigrants who have come to Canada over all these years, but we should not stop here. We should keep strengthening and improving our immigration system.

This is why I'm so proud to speak one last time in this House on behalf of Bill 49, our proposed Ontario Immigration Act. This bill is very important for newcomers and for employers, and it's the right bill at the right time for Ontario and for Canada. I'm delighted that so many immigration stakeholders, employers and newcomers themselves have spoken so positively about these proposals.

Immigration is a social good. It's also critical to our future prosperity. Bill 49, if passed, will help us attract the skilled workforce we need to succeed in today's global economy. Passage of Bill 49 will also help us strengthen our economy through trade. This is one of the many, many areas where our diversity is a huge strength.

Newcomers are bridges to their former homelands. They bring international connections and networks that drive economic growth. The more immigrants we have, the more we can tap into new markets; and the more we trade, the more jobs we create. So on these two fronts—trade and building a skilled force—Bill 49 is very important to our future.

Two years ago, our government announced Ontario's first-ever immigration strategy, entitled A New Direction. As we continue to move in our new direction, Bill 49 is the logical next step.

Bill 49, if passed, will help us achieve three goals.

#### 1720

First, it would make possible a stronger immigration partnership between Ontario and the federal government in the areas of recruitment, selection and admission of skilled immigrants.

Secondly, if passed, Bill 49 would improve the accountability, transparency and management of our provincial nominee program. We are counting on the PNP to help us attract more skilled workers to Ontario.

Third, Bill 49 would help strengthen our ongoing efforts to reduce fraud and detect misrepresentation. It would help protect the integrity of our immigrant selection program and improve accountability.



I have been encouraged by the support shown for Bill 49 from all quarters. Immigration stakeholders, employers, newcomer groups and the media have all had supportive comments.

Bill 49 has been the subject of many, many hours of debate in the House. Bill 49 was also reviewed by the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. The committee passed several amendments to the bill, including some from the opposition. I would like to thank my parliamentary assistant, MPP Cristina Martins, for all her hard work and dedication during the committee review period.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Let me do that, too.

Thanks to all committee members and presenters who appeared before the committee for your valuable input.

During committee review, it was clear to me that we were all on the same page when it comes to the future of immigration in Ontario and the vital importance that it will play in our growth and prosperity.

We heard from a total of 13 organizations that appeared before the committee, and two more provided written submissions. In all, 28 amendments were moved by all parties, including the opposition. In the end, the committee adopted 12 of those amendments.

We have responded to issues that were raised by the Ontario Bar Association and the Law Society of Upper Canada around protecting solicitor-client privilege. We have also made amendments to help strengthen and balance the compliance and enforcement mechanisms that are proposed within this bill.

I want to thank all who participated in the review for their collaboration and positive feedback. What we propose in this House today is a better bill that is now ready for third reading.

Speaker, Bill 49 is a beginning, not an end. It is a necessary first step Ontario must take if we are to attract more skilled immigrants to drive our economy, keep Ontario strong and chart our own course.

I want to thank all members of this House for their interest in this bill and urge its speedy approval. Together, we are making history in this province.

Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I'd like to thank the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade.

Continuing along with the debate, I recognize the member from Davenport.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I'm very proud to join my colleague the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade—a fine minister, if I may add—to speak one final time on behalf of Bill 49, the proposed Ontario Immigration Act.

It was very gratifying to see the widespread support that the bill enjoyed in the House and in committee. This bill is very important for newcomers and for employers. Bill 49 is also important for our province.

If passed, Ontario would be only the second province or territory in the country to have its own immigration legislation. It will allow us to build an equal and effective

partnership with the federal government so that immigration builds up Ontario socially and economically. It will send a signal around the world that Ontario takes immigration seriously. Immigration is critical to our future prosperity.

Ontario is still the number one destination for newcomers to Canada. We receive more immigrants than the combined total of all the provinces and territories west of here. But we need to make some changes so that immigration works better. Bill 49 is the vehicle that would do that.

If passed, Bill 49 will help us attract a skilled workforce that can take on the world and keep Ontario competitive. Every country is reaching out to skilled and talented immigrants the world over to join their workforce. The Ontario Immigration Act would position Ontario for success in this global economic environment. We all know talent is the most sought-after commodity in today's economy. Entrepreneurial spirit, cultural knowledge and creative thinking make economies more innovative and dynamic.

Newcomers have a strong commitment to education. Three quarters of our newcomers arrive with at least one post-secondary degree. Newcomers bring innovative ideas and unique perspectives. They make valuable contributions to emerging industries like information technology, engineering and bioscience.

It's worth noting that a recent study by the Partnership for a New American Economy found that seven of the 10 most valuable brands in the world, including Apple, Google, AT&T and IBM, come from companies founded by immigrants or the children of immigrants. We've seen similar successes here in Ontario.

We also know that economic success for Ontario comes down to trade. That's the foundation of our success. In the global economy, Ontario's cultural diversity gives us a clear edge. Ontarians come from more than 200 countries and speak 200 languages. Our diversity helps Ontario companies understand new markets and recognize opportunities.

As we all know, we need more small and medium-sized companies exporting beyond North America. That's what our government's Going Global Trade Strategy is all about. Our effort to tap into new markets is greatly enhanced by people who speak different languages, have international networks and understand different business cultures. These newcomers are important bridges to their former homelands.

Of course, it's more than just trade. We continue to rely on newcomers to maintain our labour force. With an aging population, low birth rates and retiring baby boomers, we are counting on skilled immigrants to continue helping to meet future labour needs. Over the next 10 years alone, there will be more than 2.5 million job openings, the majority high-skilled. That's why we need to make immigration a top priority in this Legislature, as our government is doing with these legislative proposals.

The legislative proposals would also strengthen our very successful immigration selection program, the prov-

incial nominee program, and enable it to keep growing and keep Ontario strong. The legislation would, if passed, demonstrate Ontario's leadership in immigration and position Ontario to take advantage of recent federal changes in the selection of economic immigrants. This would include increased employer participation in immigration selection, a key concern for business.

The legislation would, if passed, respond to labour market needs by expressly allowing the minister to set immigration targets for provincially selected immigrants. Most importantly, it recognizes the long history of immigration to the province and creates a framework for implementing the province's immigration vision.

As the minister noted, Bill 49 has been the subject of many hours of debate in this House. Bill 49 was also reviewed by the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. We heard from 13 organizations that appeared before the committee, and two more provided written submissions.

Speaker, these organizations covered the range of today's immigration stakeholders. We heard from groups representing businesses, including the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Information Technology Association of Canada. We heard from the agricultural sector, thanks to Highline Produce and Mushrooms Canada. We heard from groups representing newcomers: the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council, La Passerelle, l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. We also heard from groups representing the legal community: the Law Society of Upper Canada, the Ontario Bar Association and the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic. Each organization brought their own perspectives to the committee, but all expressed a common desire to see immigration work better for businesses, newcomers and Ontario.

1730

That's our goal with Bill 49, and I think we have a better bill as a result of the debates in this House and the 12 amendments passed at committee. I would like to thank all members and immigration stakeholders who have participated in this debate. We are proud of this bill and excited for what the future will hold for Ontario if it is passed by this House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** That was much shorter than I would have expected, between the minister and the parliamentary assistant—a mere 15 minutes of speech on Bill 49. Well, the fact is I'm going to speak for even shorter; I only have two minutes.

But I want to talk about the importance of immigration. All of us are immigrants to this land at one time or another. My ancestors came partly from Poland in 1868 on my father's side; on my mother's side, they would have come from Ireland somewhat earlier than that. My wife was born in Germany and came here in 1954.

I think that's pretty much the norm in this day and age here in the province of Ontario: that at one time or

another, our families came from elsewhere—a lot of the families much more recently. We've seen that tremendous growth over the last six months in the rank and file of the PC Party because we have been welcoming to immigrants all across Ontario, and they have embraced the philosophy of the PC Party as well. We're looking forward to bringing more of them into the fold to help us turn this province around, because this province is in rough shape, and it's getting rougher under the leadership of Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals. It's in trouble—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** If I just—  
*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Sit down, please.

Again, we've established a rule in the House that we refer to members by their title or by their riding, not by their name, please. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Thank you, Speaker. I think we've established something else, but it's not for me to argue with you, and I'm almost out of time.

There are a lot of things to be improved on. We will do it with the PC Party and with the help of all of the new immigrants who are embracing our philosophy to put these people out of business.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I used to be seatmates with Michael Prue when he was a member of my caucus. He had been waiting for over 10 years for a bill like this to come forward so we would have a little more authority to set the course as to how we can best support immigrants who come to our province. This bill takes very timid steps toward this.

There is a huge problem that is not addressed in this bill, and that is, right now we will get the registry and look, but basically, there are some bad employers out there that really take advantage of new immigrants to this province. There was a very good opportunity with this bill to put some legislation forward that would have been protective of those people, of new immigrants, but we didn't—an opportunity wasted.

It's the same thing in my field of work. Anybody who comes from health care will tell you that we have a lot of immigrants who come with a lot of knowledge and skills in health care, but there is nothing in there to facilitate their integration into our health care system so that they can work.

Et la dernière partie—une partie qui est importante pour moi—c'est de s'assurer qu'avec l'immigration on continue d'avoir une communauté francophone vibrante. Souvent, les nouveaux immigrants ne savent même pas que le français peut être une langue d'immersion et d'insertion pour les nouveaux immigrants. Les nouveaux immigrants peuvent choisir de vivre leur vie en français en Ontario. Encore une fois, on aurait pu mettre dans ce projet de loi-là des critères à rencontrer pour s'assurer que de plus en plus d'immigrants font du français leur langue d'insertion. Des petits pas timides, c'est tout ce qu'on a eu.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm relieved that the official opposition is this party of diversity and multiracial celebration, because every time I look across, that's what I think. It's such a success.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to be part of a party where, as the Minister of Immigration articulates, we have always worked very hard to ensure that not just our immigration policies are important, but that nominations in our party go to a diverse—probably one of the most racially and culturally diverse caucuses. We don't do that by dividing. I represent about 40,000 Muslims, most of them first-generation. You can imagine something like the sex education curriculum is hard for them. But I go to mosques on Friday, not to teach that people should be afraid of a daughter that has two moms or someone who's gay or that we can't learn about these things, but that we celebrate diversity, whether it's your sexual orientation, your country of origin, your gender or your age. These things aren't things that we want to divide.

I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the party opposite and the federal government—having fought Prime Minister Harper when he used to campaign against same-sex marriage and sexual orientation in the human rights charter, that's not the kind of country—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me, Minister, please. Thank you.

I recognize the member from Nepean—Carleton on a point of order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** This has nothing to do with the debate. This has nothing to do with the bill. He should speak to the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I will listen intently, Minister, I would ask that—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

I am listening closely, but I would just ask the minister to stay focused on the bill. Thank you.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But you know, that's ironic. My grandmother, who's an immigrant to this country, came here so that her children, her gay grandson, could have a country. So when the objection comes from the member from Nepean, who actually couldn't support the word "gay" in Bill 13, that rings kind of hollow, because it is about the celebration of all people, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I recognize the member from Nepean—Carleton on a point of order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I think the minister may want to correct his record. I said "gay" plenty of times not only in Bill 13, but many times. In fact, I spent time a couple of weeks ago here talking about transgender rights. I don't think it's appropriate for the minister to impugn his own motives on other—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** That's not a point of order. Thank you.

Further questions and comments.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm pleased to comment on Bill 49. I had the opportunity to spend several days in committee discussing Bill 49, the immigration act. We heard from all kinds of different professionals from right across the province about a number of different issues with the bill. We heard from the Ontario Bar Association, we heard from the Law Society of Upper Canada, and we made some amendments during the time at committee that were pertinent to some of the miscalculations that were made in the bill in its original draft by the government. So we took the opportunity in committee to improve the bill and make it a little bit better.

I find that sometimes the government brings these bills forward with a snappy title so that they can say they're doing something to improve the lives of Ontarians, but the content of the bill doesn't have anything in it that's actually going to make a difference in the province, Mr. Speaker. I think the one thing that we've discussed time and time again with the Ontario Immigration Act is that fewer and fewer new Canadians are choosing Ontario because of the mess that this government has made with the economy in this province. There's not a job for the people to come to in Ontario anymore because these guys have mismanaged every facet of our society.

I find the minister's comments a few minutes ago were completely inappropriate. They have nothing to do with the Ontario Immigration Act. He should be able to stand here on his feet and apologize to members of the Legislature for the things that he says. He should stand here and apologize because he tells mistruths in this House time and time again, Mr. Speaker. That's what he does. He doesn't speak the truth—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I would ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'll withdraw.

The bottom line is, Mr. Speaker, we're in support of the Ontario Immigration Act. We're in support of the Ontario Immigration Act, but we're not supportive of this government and its economic and energy policies, which are destroying the province of Ontario.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Speaker.

1740

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the minister for final comments, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Sorry. Back to member from Davenport for her final two-minute comment, please.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** First of all, I wanted to acknowledge the speakers who have already spoken here: the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, the member from Nickel Belt, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and also the member from Prince Edward—Hastings.

Mr. Speaker, as an immigrant myself, having come to this country with my parents 45 years ago, I recognize the importance of this particular act and what it really

does mean for the new people, the immigrants, who continue to come to this province—unlike what the member opposite from Prince Edward–Hastings commented on, saying that new immigrants do not come to Ontario. Well, that is so untrue. We see that over 40% of immigrants coming to this country continue to choose Ontario as the province of choice. Why? Because we have in place in our province the appropriate programs to welcome these newcomers, provide them the services that they need, the settlement programs that they require and the English-as-a-second-language programs that are required. We continue to have those jobs here in Ontario.

It's important that we pass this Ontario Immigration Act because it really does speak to the role that immigrants have played and continue to play in the history and the development of our province and the key role they play in our economy. I'm very proud as well to say that this act also has a provision to have 5% of immigrants coming to Ontario be francophone, which I think is absolutely fabulous, especially this year when we are celebrating 400 years of the francophone presence in the province of Ontario. How fabulous is that?

Also, we have in this act provisions to protect vulnerable new immigrants who come here from those lawyers and immigration consultants and other representatives who misrepresent these vulnerable newcomers. I'm very proud of the work that our government has put into putting this act into place. It's extremely important that we have this act passed here in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It's an honour to rise today as the PC Party's citizenship, immigration and international trade critic to comment on Bill 49. Before I begin, I would like to pay tribute to the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade for arranging a meeting with his staff and my team to go through this bill many months ago. I appreciate all the help, Minister Chan.

As our House leader has said previously of this bill, we are very supportive of the spirit and intent of the proposed Ontario Immigration Act. I want to personally thank the justice committee for the work they have done to amend this bill, as well as all the stakeholders who came forward with input to improve it and all the members here who have offered their thoughtful remarks and feedback through the hours of debate we've already had.

I'm especially very grateful to my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings, Todd Smith, who saw this bill through committee and who was the official opposition point person on this bill in its previous incarnation, when it was Bill 161. My colleague is owed a great deal of gratitude for building relationships as well over the last few years with new Canadians on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus. Again, my appreciation to the member from Prince Edward–Hastings for all his work.

Immigration is something which usually comes up legislatively at a federal level, so it isn't often that we get

a chance to discuss and debate policies concerned with it. The more debate we have on it, the more I think it has become very clear that the other work we do here—focused on the economy, education or housing, for example—has a profound effect on immigration to Ontario even though we don't always explicitly acknowledge that impact.

I'm pleased to be speaking to Bill 49 at third reading here today, and again I will be supporting this piece of legislation. I think it is a step in the right direction in that it's about time that our province takes a more active role in immigration policy. It is far from a perfect piece of legislation, but I appreciate the Ontario government bringing it forward. While the work done at committee to amend Bill 49 made some progress in dealing with the issues the opposition and third party have pointed out through the hours of debate, unfortunately I do think that we're dealing with an act that was rushed in its conception and which leaves much to be desired and still needs a lot of improvement.

I also want to point out at this time the important work that my colleague the MPP from Sarnia–Lambton has done. He has provided a lot of input from his communities in Sarnia on this bill. I know a number of these amendments were brought forward at committee, so special thanks to the member from Sarnia–Lambton.

I'm also very disappointed that the government voted down all the amendments put forward by the Ontario PC caucus. Some of these amendments were, word for word, the recommendations of the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Ontario Bar Association. While this government did propose and pass amendments that accomplished what these groups were looking for, it seems very petty and partisan to vote down the amendments just because they came from the official opposition. If we want our committees to work collaboratively in shaping comprehensive, thoughtful bills, this kind of partisan game-playing needs to stop.

Ontario has traditionally been the premier destination for immigration to Canada, but as new Canadians have increasingly been choosing provinces like Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia instead, we've seen very little action by this government to turn the tide.

Making the decision to leave your own country to come live in a new place is incredibly brave. There are so many wonderful stories of people who have flourished in Ontario after taking risks, uprooting their families, sometimes coming here with very little except faith that they're coming to a place of opportunity where they will be supported and to which they can contribute.

It's a responsibility that we have, as elected representatives and policy-makers in the province of Ontario, to make good on that faith that these brave immigrants have in our great province.

Unfortunately, there are also many stories of people who come here with hope but who are exploited by shady recruiters or who are forced to work in menial or part-time jobs because their qualifications don't count for anything in Ontario.



As we consider Bill 49, the Ontario Immigration Act, it must be with the well-being of the people who have put faith in this province in mind, whether they have just submitted their application or they have been here for decades.

We have seen a lot of good work done in this Legislature to recognize the legacy of immigration to Ontario. Just last week, I rose here to speak to South Asian Heritage Month. Earlier this afternoon, we had a flag-raising ceremony in recognition of Dutch Heritage Month. We make a great effort here in this House and across Ontario to recognize the vital contributions made by the people of our province who came here to be Canadians but who remember their roots and celebrate the traditions and heritage of the countries in which they were born. I feel very fortunate, as a member of provincial Parliament, to have had so many opportunities to attend events and to speak in this House to recognize the cultural and economic contributions of our many new Canadian communities.

Immigration has built Ontario up. We pride ourselves in our history of attracting people from around the world to live here, and we pride ourselves on the unique identity which this diversity has given us.

I'm very proud of the work which our new leader of the PC Party, Patrick Brown, has already done to reach out to new Canadians. We saw very recently, for example, how much goodwill exists between our leader and the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Modi. That is a great signal to the people of India and South Asia who may consider coming to our great Ontario.

I myself have had many opportunities over the past few months to attend events with new Canadians who have not really been engaged with the provincial government up to now. Many of them are familiar with the federal government, of course, because immigration largely falls under federal jurisdiction, but they haven't had as much occasion to become involved at the provincial level. I'm very excited to be working with our PC caucus and our new leader, Patrick Brown, to ensure they stay engaged and to make sure their issues and concerns have a voice right here at Queen's Park in the government of Ontario.

As legislators, we need to create good, comprehensive policy. We can't just pay lip service to the idea of diversity; we need to have a nuanced view of the immigrant experience here in our province. We need to respect and recognize what makes their cultures and traditions unique, and make sure they have the tools to build a happy, productive life here in Ontario.

1750

It isn't enough for the government to celebrate our heritage of welcoming immigrants. We need to look to the future and build an economy that attracts people to our province and work to create policy that is mutually beneficial to new Canadians and the province as a whole.

I think everyone here has numerous stories of encountering new immigrants who are qualified as doctors, lawyers, engineers and other highly skilled professionals in their own countries, but they come here and have to

take jobs for which they're wildly overqualified. I can only imagine what a discouraging and depressing experience that would be. This doesn't serve them, and this misuse of their abilities doesn't serve Ontario's economy, which is why I would like to see more work being done by this government to ensure that these professionals are able to get equivalence in their credentials more efficiently and get to work in their field.

I don't see much progress being made on that front in this bill, which is very disappointing. The amendment included in this bill to make changes to the Regulated Health Professions Act seems almost like a token gesture. To add an amendment which basically stipulates that decisions and notices be given "in a reasonable time" is a very non-specific and marginally helpful measure which is actually an indictment of the process this government currently has in place. I would like to think that in the province of Ontario, in this day and age, having things done in a reasonable time would be a given. But, unfortunately, it has become apparent that this is not the modus operandi of the current regime. Of all the amendments that could be made, I think this has to be one of the least ambitious that could be imagined.

If we're going to have an immigration act here in Ontario that is focused in large part on employment and bringing in high skills, it would make sense to include measures that will allow for a broad range of professionals to make use of the express entry system. I would also like to point out that we already have a large number of skilled workers here who aren't able to work in their field, either because of red tape or because they're unable to connect with employers who could put their skills to work. While it's obviously important that we do our best for prospective immigrants, I think this government needs to also do some work on behalf of the people who have already immigrated to Ontario.

Newcomers to our province are looking to this government to address the wage and opportunity gaps between themselves and native-born Canadians, but that is another area of immigration policy which the Liberal immigration act is neglecting. Statistics have shown that our skilled immigrants are underemployed or unemployed. So it comes back to jobs. If this government can't create the environment for good, dependable jobs for its current citizens, how can we expect skilled workers to uproot their lives to come here and gamble on an uncertain job market?

My caucus colleagues and I strongly support the federal government's new expression-of-interest program, which began this January. It helps these prospective immigrants connect with potential employers and find where there is opportunity. The express entry program has the potential to get internationally trained professionals to put their skills to work quickly and effectively in their fields of expertise, which is obviously a great thing for them and for our province. We want our businesses to have access to the skilled workers they need to develop and expand their businesses and create jobs.

We strongly support this goal of Bill 49: to attract more skilled immigrants to Ontario and to do what we

can to give them opportunities to succeed here and build a better future for themselves and, importantly, for their families.

While we obviously welcome refugees to our province, as well as family-class immigrants and those accepted into Canada for humanitarian or compassionate reasons, it makes sense that our economic-class immigrants be selected through a demand-driven system rather than a first-come, first-served system, as has historically been the practice. This shift is a real step forward in optimizing the economic immigrant stream.

Ontario needs to work with the federal government on immigration and labour force strategies if we want to ensure we have a workforce that can drive Ontario's economy forward. Working with the federal government has not been a strong suit of the current government or the Liberal government prior to this current Liberal government. Of course, that concerns me deeply, and it's not beneficial for the people in the province of Ontario. I'm not confident that the potential of this program will be realized under the present Liberal government as a result of their inability to work effectively with our federal partners.

Even outside of the public disputes this government has had with the federal government, Ontario's Auditor General reported only several months ago that she had found evidence that the provincial nominee program was aware of applicants and immigration consultants who misrepresented information on their applications or otherwise became aware of potential immigration fraud but never formally reported this information to federal immigration authorities or law enforcement. As she rightly observed, "This is a threat to the integrity of the program."

Minister Chan stepped forward to assure the public that such issues would be dealt with in this bill, Bill 49, but I don't see any specifics in this piece of legislation, and I'm very discouraged by this precedent.

I do appreciate that the ministry has taken action and reported these findings to the OPP, but I also have to wonder about what kind of working relationship we can expect to have with the federal government when we are failing to communicate such serious issues of mutual concern to them.

The framework laid out for us here by the federal government is sound, and I'm pleased to see this government moving forward legislation that will let us take advantage of this opportunity, even if I worry about the ability of the government to execute it effectively.

Businesses here in our province have had a lot of obstacles—I mentioned red tape previously—and expenses to deal with in recent years, so seeing a measure come through this House that may actually help them is very welcome. Even after the good work done by the justice committee on this bill, I do have some concerns, though, which I will be walking through in the remainder of my time speaking to Bill 49.

As we know, tens of thousands of immigrants choose to come to Canada every year. Unfortunately, as my colleague and friend from Prince Edward-Hastings mentioned earlier, many of these new Canadians are choosing other provinces to move to. While there are undoubtedly many factors that influence these decisions, the reality is that there just aren't as many opportunities in Ontario as there once were. Everyone who comes here is looking for a better life for their children; a fair, honest and good government; and a place where hard work brings success. All of these are very worthy goals. Ontario used to be that place, but something unfortunately has changed in this province.

A few decades ago, Ontario was Canada's economic powerhouse. Now Ontario is a have-not province, something which had never happened before this Liberal government took office. Not only that, but our provincial debt has reached alarming levels: \$23,000 for every man, woman and child in the province of Ontario. As we've seen in the government's new budget, this dollar figure is growing, not shrinking, and their record with deficit reduction and meeting financial targets isn't strong. These facts are very unattractive to potential immigrants.

I was glad to see the new leader of the Ontario PC Party, Patrick Brown, when he addressed the Legislature yesterday, on the floor of the Legislature with the visiting Premier from Quebec, highlight that point exactly when he talked about the province of Quebec getting their fiscal house in order, getting government living within its means. But yet here in Ontario, we're going in the opposite direction. It's one lesson that the Liberal government could be learning from other provinces in Canada.

Building on this point, the Auditor General has pointed out that 87% of Saskatchewan's immigrants came from the economic class. Other provinces' numbers were also very high, including 78% in Manitoba and 68% in Alberta. In Ontario, this number was around half. Again and again, the data suggests that economically motivated immigrants are not choosing Ontario, and this is a major departure from our past.

I know I'm not the only member of this House who finds this very disappointing. I'm sure there are many Liberal MPPs who must be hearing this from new Canadians and family members who are telling them this back in their constituencies.

I will be continuing my response and my one-hour lead on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus when the House resumes and when it's my turn next to speak to this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I thank the member, and I thank all members who contributed to debate today.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Since it is now 6 o'clock, this House is adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*



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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
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Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
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Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
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<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
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		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
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Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
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Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
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		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
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Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
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**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
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Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

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Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
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Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short









*Continued from back cover*

## **Special report, Auditor General**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4330
------------------------------------	------

## **DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS**

### **Time allocation**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4330
-------------------------------------	------

### **2015 Ontario budget**

Motion agreed to .....	4331
------------------------	------

### **Time allocation**

Motion agreed to .....	4331
------------------------	------

### **Visitors**

Hon. Mario Sergio.....	4331
Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....	4332

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Norm Miller .....	4332
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4332
Mme France Gélinas .....	4332
Mr. Joe Dickson .....	4332
Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	4332
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4332

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario**

Mr. Bill Walker.....	4332
----------------------	------

### **Labour disputes**

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4332
-------------------------	------

### **International Museum Day / Journée internationale des musées**

Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	4333
------------------------	------

### **Earthquake in Nepal**

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4333
----------------------------	------

### **Riding of Windsor—Tecumseh**

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4333
-------------------------	------

### **Environmental initiatives**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4334
-------------------------------	------

### **Health care funding**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	4334
---------------------	------

### **Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario**

Mr. Joe Dickson .....	4334
-----------------------	------

### **OMNI programs**

Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	4334
---------------------------	------

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

### **Standing Committee on Government Agencies**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4335
Report deemed adopted.....	4335

### **Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	4335
Debate adjourned .....	4335

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Supporting Ontario's Trails Act, 2015, Bill 100,**

**Mr. Coteau / Loi de 2015 sur le soutien aux sentiers  
de l'Ontario, projet de loi 100, M. Coteau**

First reading agreed to.....	4335
------------------------------	------

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Police Week / Semaine de la police**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4336
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	4337
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4337

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Health care funding**

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4338
-------------------------	------

### **Protection de l'environnement**

M. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4338
---------------------------	------

### **Dog ownership**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	4339
---------------------	------

### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4339
-------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4339
-----------------------------	------

### **Ontario Disability Support Program**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	4339
-------------------------	------

### **Hospital funding**

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	4340
-------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn.....	4340
---------------------------	------

### **Taxation**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	4340
---------------------	------

### **Gasoline prices**

Mme France Gélinas.....	4341
-------------------------	------

### **Water fluoridation**

Mr. Bob Delaney.....	4341
----------------------	------

**Government services**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4341
--------------------------	------

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR****Time allocation**

Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4341
Vote deferred .....	4343

**Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015,****Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur****l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la  
prosperité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid**

Second reading vote deferred .....	4343
------------------------------------	------

**Ontario Immigration Act, 2015, Bill 49, Mr. Chan /****Loi de 2015 sur l'immigration en Ontario, projet  
de loi 49, M. Chan**

Hon. Michael Chan .....	4343
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4344
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4345
Mme France G��linas .....	4345
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4346
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4346
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4346
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4347
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4349



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 12 May 2015 / Mardi 12 mai 2015

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

<b>Invasive Species Act, 2015, Bill 37, Mr. Mauro / Loi de 2015 sur les espèces envahissantes, projet de loi 37, M. Mauro</b>	
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4309
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	4309
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4309
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4310
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4310
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4310
Hon. Bill Mauro .....	4313
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4313
M. Michael Mantha .....	4313
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4314
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4314
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4314
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4315
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4316
Ms. Soo Wong .....	4316
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4317
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4317
Mr. Grant Crack .....	4318
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4318
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4318
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4319

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4319
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4319
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4319
Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4319
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4319
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4319
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4319
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4319
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4319
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4319
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4319
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4320

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

<b>Teachers' labour disputes</b>	
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4320
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4320

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4320
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4321
<b>Hydro rates</b>	
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4321
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4321
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4322
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4322
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4323
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4323
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4324
<b>Ontario budget</b>	
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4324
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4324
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4324
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4325
<b>Parapan Am Games</b>	
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4325
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4325
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4325
<b>Winter highway maintenance</b>	
Mr. Norm Miller .....	4326
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4326
<b>Education funding</b>	
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4326
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4326
<b>Changement climatique / Climate change</b>	
Mme Marie-France Lalonde .....	4327
L'hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4327
<b>Lyme disease</b>	
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4328
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4328
Hon. Bill Mauro .....	4328
<b>Government advertising</b>	
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4328
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4328
<b>Tobacco control</b>	
Ms. Harinder Malhi .....	4329
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4329
<b>Ontario film and television industry</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4330
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4330

*Continued on inside back cover*



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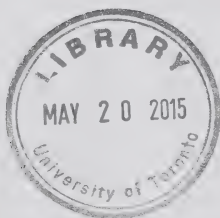
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# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 13 May 2015

Mercredi 13 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 13 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 13 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Ms. Damerla moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. Damerla moves third reading of Bill 45.

Ms. Damerla?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I am pleased to rise today for the third reading of Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

As we begin, I would like to thank everyone who appeared before the Standing Committee on General Government, especially the youth, who did a great job. I also want to acknowledge my colleague the member for Kingston and the Islands, with whom I will be splitting my time this morning and whom I would like to thank for diligently shepherding this bill through the committee process. Thank you so much. I would also like to warmly thank all the members of the committee who worked so very hard in closely considering Bill 45.

It would be remiss of me, Mr. Speaker, not to, at this point, acknowledge the leadership shown by the former Minister of Health, Minister Deb Matthews, as well as the leadership shown by yourself, the Speaker, and the MPP France Gélinas, for their work on laying the groundwork for many parts and many elements of this bill.

This comprehensive legislative package, if passed, would protect youth from the dangers of tobacco and the potential harms of electronic cigarettes, also known as e-cigarettes. Also included in the proposed legislation are measures to help families make healthier choices by giving them caloric information when eating out or purchasing take-away meals. The Making Healthier Choices Act, if passed, will play an important role in empowering Ontarians to make the decisions that help them lead healthier lives and move us even closer to a truly smoke-free Ontario.

The fact is that we've done very well here in Ontario. Between 2000 and 2013, Ontario's smoking rate dropped from 24.5% to 18.1%, which equals approximately 332,000 fewer smokers in Ontario. Since 2005, Ontario has become an international leader in tobacco control because of our Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Our government has taken a strong stand in protecting people from second-hand smoke in enclosed public places and enclosed workplaces.

But the fact is that there is more to do; the fact is that even today too many people die tobacco-related deaths.

Since 2005, Ontario has become an international leader in tobacco control because of our Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Further amendments to the act included protecting children from exposure to second-hand smoke in motor vehicles, as of 2009, and prohibiting the sale of flavoured cigarillos, as of 2010.

On January 1 of this year, new regulations came into effect that:

- make it more difficult for young people to purchase tobacco by prohibiting tobacco sales on post-secondary education campuses;

- prohibit smoking on all bar and restaurant outdoor patios, with an exemption for uncovered patios that were established by a branch of the Royal Canadian Legion prior to November 18, 2013; and

- prohibit smoking on playgrounds, publicly owned sporting areas, spectator areas adjacent to sporting areas and the 20 metres surrounding these areas.

Our government continues to take active steps to protect young people from the health risks and impacts of smoking.

This act has three schedules, the first of which, if passed, would ban all flavoured tobacco. The reason we are doing this is very clear. If we are to truly push down smoking rates in Ontario, we have to do two things: First, we have to help those who want to quit, quit; secondly, we have to do everything we can to ensure that that next generation of smokers does not start smoking.



The evidence is clear that the tobacco industry adds flavours to tobacco to attract new smokers, particularly youth. It is in this context that we have moved forward to ban all flavoured tobacco, including menthol. We believe that this legislation, if passed, will truly move us that much closer to a smoke-free Ontario.

But there is a new player in town, and I vividly remember the first time I came across it. I was on the GO train with my daughter when I thought I saw somebody smoking on the GO train. I was shocked, because it's not something we usually see. We don't see somebody smoking in enclosed spaces anymore.

I recall telling my daughter, "Look at that. Somebody is flouting whatever rule it is. How is it that this person is so blatantly smoking inside the car of a GO train?" My daughter, of course, is a teenager who knows a lot more about these things, turned to me and said, "Mom, that's not a cigarette; it's an electronic cigarette."

I recall that moment particularly for what it was, because it was so jarring for me to see what looked like somebody smoking inside the GO train. I think it speaks to the fact that an entire generation of Ontarians has never seen anybody smoke inside a subway, inside a movie theatre, inside the workplace or inside a GO train. It speaks to the success of our anti-smoking legislation and the hard-fought gains—really hard-fought gains—that we must continue to protect.

The fact is that electronic cigarettes are both an opportunity and a risk. This is new technology that, quite frankly, might have the potential for harm reduction. But at the same time, we also recognize that in the absence of longitudinal studies, in the absence of longitudinal evidence, we still don't know what all the risks of this new technology might be. So we've tried to negotiate a careful path between recognizing the potential for harm reduction that electronic cigarettes bring and, at the same time, recognizing that there could be risks and harms associated with this new technology that we are not fully aware of. That is why we are moving to regulate electronic cigarettes.

0910

If the Electronic Cigarettes Act is passed, it would call for:

- a ban the sale and supply of e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 19;

- a prohibition on the use of e-cigarettes in certain places, such as enclosed work spaces and enclosed public places;

- a ban on the sale of e-cigarettes in certain places such as vending machines or grocery stores that contain pharmacies;

- a prohibition on the display and promotion of e-cigarettes in places where e-cigarettes or tobacco products are sold or offered for sale.

We have listened to the concerns expressed by stakeholders, including specialty e-cigarette retailers, and any exemptions will be considered during the regulation-making process.

These changes would ban the sale of e-cigarettes to minors, making it harder for youth to obtain e-cigarettes. It would also make tobacco products less tempting by banning the sale of flavored tobacco, which I already spoke to.

In addition to banning menthol and regulating electronic cigarettes, this act would also, if passed, make it mandatory for any restaurant or food service premise in Ontario with over 20 locations to post calories on their menus and menu boards. More specifically, if passed, the act would require calories for standard food and beverage items, including alcohol, to be posted on menus and menu boards in restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores and other food service premises with 20 or more locations in Ontario. It would require food service premises to post contextual information that would help to educate patrons about their daily caloric requirements and authorize inspectors to enforce menu-labelling requirements.

Currently, over 60% of large chain restaurants already provide nutritional information voluntarily upon demand, on websites or in-store. The proposed menu-labelling legislation is also a key component of our Healthy Kids Strategy, which responds to the Healthy Kids Panel's recommendations for reducing childhood obesity.

We have heard from many partners and individuals regarding the importance of what we're proposing, and should this legislation pass we will continue these discussions in the form of consultations with key stakeholders to ensure successful implementation.

It is interesting that the proposed menu-labelling legislation has widespread support in Ontario, and I'm one of those who supports this legislation. I'm going to share a story: Back in 2011 when I first ran for office, I remember somebody saying to me, just in passing, "You're going to campaign, and you're going to lose some weight." I said, "That's good. Win or lose, at least I'll lose some weight." I recall very clearly that at the end of the campaign I had actually gained weight. I was a little surprised, but I didn't think much of it; there was just too much to do as a brand new MPP. As it happened, the penny dropped for me—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** That's why we're going to go ahead with this legislation and you're going to support us.

As I was saying, the penny dropped one day when, quite accidentally and inadvertently, I was browsing the website of Tim Hortons and found out that a medium Iced Capp can pack as much as 600 or 700 calories. That's when the penny dropped for me. All of you who may remember the 2014 election will recall that it was a summer election, a very hot election. I remember that at the end of every canvass I would treat my volunteers to a cold drink. Usually we'd go to Tim's, and people would have a coffee and I would usually get myself an Iced Capp. The trouble was that I would canvass about three times a day. So while my volunteers might be drinking one Iced Capp, there were days I was drinking three Iced

Capps a day, packing in 1,800 calories. Meanwhile, it appears that the maximum calories for an adult woman is somewhere in the 1,500 to 1,800 range, and here I was, taking in 1,500 calories just through my Iced Capps. Then, of course, add the doughnuts and samosas and all the stuff that goes with a campaign, and no wonder I gained some weight. The point I'm making is: When I walked into the Tim Hortons, had I been able to see, next to the Iced Capp, 600 calories—might I only have bought myself one a day instead of three a day? I think that is the power of this legislation. It really is about empowering Ontarians; helping them make the decisions they need to make. I, personally, am truly looking forward to this legislation as well.

In all, the goal, the leitmotif, of all these three pieces of legislation is quite simple: It is about making Ontario the best place in North America—the healthiest place in North America—to grow up and grow old.

We have consulted extensively, in making this legislation, but I also want to say to the House that the consultation process doesn't stop with the passing of the bill. Should this bill pass and we go to regulation-making, I have committed to once again consult broadly with our stakeholders because, as we all know, it is at the regulation stage of a bill that the rubber actually hits the road. So I have committed—and we have committed—to talking to all of our stakeholders to make sure that we get this bill right, with just one goal; that is, to make Ontario the lowest-smoking jurisdiction and to make Ontario the healthiest place in North America to grow up and grow old.

I hope that all of you will find the bill worthy of support.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I am really proud today to be here and to support this critical piece of legislation. As Minister Damerla has so clearly laid out, passage of the legislation under debate today would ban the sale of e-cigarettes to minors, making it harder for youth to obtain e-cigarettes.

It would also make tobacco products less tempting by banning the sale of flavoured tobacco, including menthol, and permit the government to further limit exposure to second-hand smoke in public areas.

It would also require large, chain food-service premises like fast-food restaurants to post calories on menus, providing key support to helping Ontarians make well-informed choices about what they eat and what they feed their children when dining out. I'd say it's hard to argue with that.

If passed, schedule 1 of the Making Healthier Choices Act will take effect on January 1, 2017. Following the passage, key stakeholders will be consulted on the development of regulations to support the legislation, including:

- calorie posting, in order to determine the size, format and prominence of calorie information to be posted

- on menus, and how calorie information will be determined;

- standard food items, in order to provide further clarity and/or set out requirements for standard food items captured by the legislation;

- contextual statement, in order to determine the size, format and content of the contextual statement, such as that the average adult requires 2,000 calories a day;

- exemptions, in order to determine if any of the exemptions from the calorie posting requirements are needed, such as seasonal items on the menu for a limited number of days.

Let me now speak to the ban on the sale of flavoured tobacco. In the 2014 budget, our government committed to prohibiting the sale of tobacco products that contain flavours and additives that appeal to youth. These products are often packaged in brightly coloured wrappers and smell strongly of candy and fruit flavours—precisely what appeals to youth.

Additional evidence emerged indicating that young people in significant numbers are using menthol-flavoured tobacco products. During committee hearings, we heard from a representative of the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario division, which has been advocating for a ban on youth-friendly flavoured tobacco for a long time. According to the society, flavoured tobacco products are no longer so-called niche products. Instead, they are widely used by the majority of youth who use tobacco products. In Ontario, more than 57,000 youth in grades 6 to 12 have reported using a flavoured tobacco product in the last 30 days. Almost 19,000 Ontario youth, or one in four who reported smoking, say that they are smoking menthol cigarettes. I started with a menthol cigarette.

**0920**

The society believes that the inclusion of menthol in Bill 45 is both progressive and necessary. Dr. David McKeown, Toronto's Medical Officer of Health, cited a recent University of Waterloo research study which found that more than half of youth tobacco users in grades 9 to 12 used flavoured tobacco products; a quarter of youth smokers smoked menthol cigarettes. This demonstrates youth's preference for flavours and the strong appeal of menthol cigarettes in particular.

We have a responsibility to act on flavoured tobacco, and we are going to do that by banning all flavours, be it bubble gum or mint. I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of this House that key stakeholders will be consulted on the following proposed amendments to Ontario regulation 48/06 through the Ontario regulatory registry. With respect to flavoured tobacco, we will consult on how to define the term "flavouring agent" for the purposes of describing what types of flavoured tobacco are prohibited for sale and what exemptions might apply, such as flavoured tobacco products primarily used by adults, that is, those that contain additives but still predominantly taste like tobacco and no other flavour.

In December 2013, consultations were conducted through the Ontario registry on the following proposed amendments:



Hospital grounds: Prohibit smoking on outdoor grounds of hospitals; and

Provincial government properties: Prohibit smoking on the grounds of specified provincial government properties and prohibit the sale of tobacco on specified provincial government properties.

The government is planning to move forward with these proposed initiatives. They will help to ensure that the gains made under the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy are maintained.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Twenty people in the room and 19 conversations.

Go ahead.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With this strong action, we are working to prevent the next generation of Ontarians from becoming addicted to tobacco. Banning the sale of flavoured tobacco products will help us to achieve our goal of having the lowest smoking rate in Canada.

The dangers of smoking and tobacco use are well known and documented. However, the risks that come with the use of e-cigarettes may be less familiar to some of you. During the committee hearings on the bill, presentations were made that pointed to the possible risks associated with e-cigarettes. Further, a study from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published in *Nicotine and Tobacco Research* in August 2014, found that in a nationally representative sample of middle- and high-school students who had never smoked cigarettes, youth who had used e-cigarettes were nearly two times more likely to have intentions to smoke conventional cigarettes than youth who had never used e-cigarettes.

I want to make it clear that it is not our government's intention to remove e-cigarettes from the Ontario marketplace at this time. The proposed approach focuses on taking action to protect Ontario's children and youth from accessing and using a product that may pose potential harm to their health.

I believe all members will agree that this proposed legislation is a measured and precautionary response to a new and emerging product that may have harmful effects.

If the legislation is passed, our government intends to consult with key stakeholders on the development of regulations to support the legislation. The consultations will focus on two parts. During the first part, the ministry will consult to facilitate the implementation of age-based sales restrictions, which are proposed to come into effect on January 1, 2016. The subject of these consultations will include a number of areas.

Through the regulatory registry, the ministry will consult around signage in order to clarify that all signs required by the act and the regulations must be posted in a clearly visible area.

The ministry will also consult on the types of identification that would be acceptable as proof of age to ensure that persons who have access to e-cigarettes are at least 19 years of age.

We will be asking for opinions about details regarding the signage to be posted at all retail outlets selling electronic cigarettes. The signage would indicate that electronic cigarette sales are restricted to those 19 years of age and older.

Finally, through the regulatory registry, we will discuss the details regarding the signage that is to be posted at all retail outlets selling electronic cigarettes. The signage would indicate that ID is requested for anyone who appears to be under the age of 25.

The second phase will focus on the implementation of the other provisions of the bill, which are proposed to come into effect January 1, 2017. These provisions include display and promotion, and use and sales restrictions in certain places.

In order to facilitate implementation, the ministry will consult on: details regarding required signage showing e-cigarettes are prohibited for use in specified places; details regarding additional areas where the use of e-cigarettes is prohibited; and details on the display and promotion ban.

The ministry will also consult on procedures for employees who complain of being retaliated against by an employer. We will also look at procedures for home health care workers who leave a client's home, which will mirror the procedure in the regulation made under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act; and finally, procedures for seizing funds in vending machines in the form of credit card and debit transactions.

The measures we are proposing under this legislation are part of our commitment under Patients First, Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care, to provide Ontarians with the information they need to play an active role in their own health. The importance of this legislation cannot be underestimated. Responsible government does not, and will not, leave its citizens' best possible health to chance.

One of the reasons why this legislation is so important to me personally is because my brother is a former smoker. He has dreadful asthma, and he has been taking prednisone for many, many years, which has deteriorated his bone health. He's only two years older than me and has had hip-replacement surgery.

I cannot underestimate the importance of this legislation, and I truly hope that we have the support of this House on this very important bill.

I'm proud to say that our government is taking action to help our young people stay healthy and get the best possible start in life. There is nothing quite like observing a loved one who has difficulty breathing—every breath is an effort.

I urge all members to support our proposed legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I'm pleased to stand here in the Legislature and address Bill 45 at third reading. I was privileged in second reading to address this particular bill. We, in the Progressive Conservatives, will, in fact, be supporting this bill.

There are three key elements of this bill that I do want to talk very briefly about, since my time is limited. One is, first of all, of course, the banning of marketing of tobacco products to children. We all know the impact—that once they catch children at a young age and they start smoking, the addiction aspect of that. And, of course, it leads to other things, not just smoking cigarettes or pipes or cigars, but it also leads to perhaps illegal drugs as well. There are statistics to prove that.

The other thing is that we want to crack down on illegal smoke shacks, where people can, in fact, purchase these cigarettes at a very cheap price.

The other thing that is of interest to me is not only just the childhood obesity—because we look at it, and we're saying, "Well, what are we doing in our school systems these days to encourage more physical activity?" In the younger grades, the elementary grades, they're fairly busy. Then they get into high school, and my concern there is that they only have to take one credit for phys. ed. in their four years of high school. Of course, to me, that just adds, again, to the need for them to get on a weight-control program, because they're not as physically active.

0930

The other thing, in the few moments that I have left, is to talk about the calorie count. I find that calorie count—I count calories, and I keep a close eye on it. Since January 1, I have dropped over 40 pounds by keeping a close eye on things. Again, I think that that's really, really important, that people start to take count of their calories to enhance their lifestyles.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The NDP supports Bill 45 to help protect the health of families and young people. We know that calorie labelling in chain restaurants will help families make informed decisions. We know that tougher restrictions on smoking, including a ban on flavored tobacco products, will help discourage young people from smoking.

That being said, the Liberals voted against key amendments that would have served to make this bill much stronger. The NDP moved 17 amendments in committee and the Liberals voted against 16 of those changes, such as immediately banning menthol tobacco products. We've already heard that the use of menthol increases smoking amongst young people. It would have made sense for the Liberals to support us on that amendment.

Mandating sodium labelling on menus: Again, this only makes sense considering the bill mandates calorie labelling. Many of the presenters at committee spoke about the need for sodium labelling, which the Liberals have clearly ignored.

We moved an amendment allowing municipalities to require additional nutrition information so long as they include the labelling required by provincial law. Many municipalities have been ground-breakers when it comes to protecting public health, when it comes to dealing with issues like smoking and healthy food. It would make

sense to continue to allow them to have the power to go beyond provincial statute.

We put forward an amendment the Liberals didn't support mandating the minister to establish a committee to review whether sodium information should be displayed.

We support this bill, but it could have been much stronger if the Liberals had supported the NDP amendments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to be able to stand and speak in favour of Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act, for its third reading. I just wanted to focus on the menu labelling for a second. It goes without saying that we all want to make sure that our children eat healthy. We understand what that means later down the road for them. If we teach them to eat healthy now, when they're adults they will eat healthy. And for ourselves as well, we need to eat healthy.

I know from many years of consumer advocacy that it really boils down to: Do consumers have the information they need to make informed choices? All too often, when we go into restaurants, we don't have the information we need to make informed choices. We've all heard the stories about buying a healthy bran muffin over the chocolate doughnut, only to find out years later with some horror that that doughnut had less fat in it, had less sugar in it, than the healthy bran muffin—alleged healthy bran muffin.

I know from my work on processed food labelling that's going through the federal process right now—I was shocked to learn from food scientists and merchandisers that we have what the food scientists would call the taste triumvirate: fat, sugar and salt. What shocked me, working with consumer advocates, is that all too often, when a product that we see on the shelf with the label "low salt"—it in fact has lower salt than the regular brand, but what they do when they drop one of those—salt, fat or sugar—is to boost up the other. So "low fat" might mean an increase in sugar or salt; "low salt" usually means an increase in fat. It's very confusing for consumers when they think they're buying healthy and in fact they're not.

I think Bill 45 goes a long way to making sure that we can take care of our children and we as consumers can make an informed choice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I, too, am pleased to join the debate on Bill 45. I think it is important that people make informed choices, but if you really want to, you can inform yourself. Some of the stuff in Bill 45, I think, will be nice to see, but no one is ever going to go into McDonald's and actually say, "Before I eat that Big Mac that I love so much, I'm going to check all of the nutritional stuff on it." They've already done their research; they know. If they really care about what's going into their bodies, they've already done that research.



I'll tell you, one of the biggest threats we have in our society is obesity and what we're seeing with our children, and that is because healthy choices are not being made. The parents have to spend more time thinking about how much time their children are spending in front of a TV screen or a computer and how much time they're spending doing physical activities that burn calories. As this becomes more prevalent, the strain on our health care system is going to become more and more evident. It's a big strain on our health care system already—illnesses associated with obesity—and we need to do a whole lot better than we're doing today or we're going to have a real tsunami of disastrous and catastrophic health care issues as we head into the future.

This is a start, but just putting numbers on a menu is not the issue. There has to be some real education for people that they understand. It's a question most times of input and output. We live in a sedentary society today. Very few people do hard, physical work anymore, so we have to find ways of burning off those calories.

We live in a high-stress world, as well, which is a challenge. We have to find ways of burning off those calories in a healthy way and consuming less of them. Look at the portions that are served today versus 20 years ago. They are much larger. We have to change the way we live.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has two minutes.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I want to thank the member for Chatham–Kent–Essex, the member for Toronto–Danforth and the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for taking the time to respond to this bill.

Before that, I'd also like to take some time to thank and welcome many stakeholders who have been with us every step of the way for Bill 45. They are in the members' gallery here: Kalaisan Kalaichelvan and Nicole McInerney; Chris Yaccato, Lindsey Quarrie, Monica Sarkar, Kaitlyn Wallace, Kristy Ste Marie and Gemma Styling from the Ontario Lung Association; and from the Heart and Stroke Foundation we have Cristin Napier, Krista Orendorff, Nadia Formigoni and Brian Kellow.

In the time that I have left, I just want to thank all three members who, for the most part, spoke out in support of this bill. What's there to not support? That's how I would look at it.

To address the member from Toronto–Danforth, I believe this is a robust bill. This is a bill that we have widely consulted on, and I believe we have landed in the right place.

I take the points by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke as well around the fact that, yes, we agree that this is just one tool in our tool box of fighting obesity. The posting of calories is not the only solution; he's right. We need to look at other things, including living more actively, and those are initiatives that this government is actually moving forward on.

But largely today I just want to say that this has been a long journey. I want to thank everybody who has been

there to support us, and I truly look forward to the passage of this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I believe we have unanimous consent to stand down our lead.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry seeks unanimous consent to stand down the lead. Agreed? Agreed.

The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I am happy to rise and speak to third reading of Bill 45. It's a bill that I spoke to at second reading and that I also sat in on for a number of hours on amendments. Typical, I guess, of all the bills I've sat in on for amendments, essentially all the amendments were voted down by this government. It's a practice I've seen since I got here, where it doesn't matter what the amendments are. They talk about sending bills off for reasonable and needed changes, but when we get there, there's certainly no consideration given to really improving the bills.

**0940**

We do support this bill. We did want to see some changes. There's a lot of good in it and there are a lot of things that we need in our system. The calories on menus is one part. I think a lot of us, especially a lot of people here, struggle with their weight. It was funny to hear the story about electioneering, when you're on the road and you're always typically jumping in to grab something, fast food, and sometimes some of this food will surprise you.

I remember working as a fundraiser at Tim Hortons and being involved with the makeup of some of their foods and seeing just how much cream is actually used in some of their drinks. I remember the Iced Capp is essentially a glass full of 19% cream, so it's got a lot of calories in it. I was somewhat surprised. Certainly you can ask for it to be made with milk, which you can imagine takes down the calorie level an extreme amount. I don't know what the calorie rating would be, although I know they provide it, but it's just an indication of how you're taking something—and really, I don't find a big difference in taste between the standard one that you'd get if you normally ask for an Iced Capp or one made with milk. But you can see the numbers are significant and something that this calorie information would certainly be a big help with.

In the same light, I remember before coming up here my wife, Margie, and I went on a bike trip from Niagara Falls to the Quebec border. It's something they do every year, and it's something I got to know because they used to end up in our township at the Quebec border. We used to have a little bit of a party for them to celebrate the accomplishment. As we started out, I one year tried to make it from Cornwall to the border and had quite a bit of trouble but finally made it. They were looking for somebody to do the whole track. They wanted a municipal politician, so I ended up doing it the next year. There was a lady who was on that trip, and you know

how you hear people talking. She was talking about getting on the trip to lose weight. At the end, she said she was upset because she hadn't lost any weight. She said, "You know, those energy bars." Everywhere you stopped, there were energy bars. Of course you're exercising and you think, well, you need the energy. But when you look at the calories on those energy bars, they add up. In fact, I think she said she put on 10 pounds. So it's just something that can happen. Intentions are well worth it sometimes, but in the end what comes out of it is quite different.

So when I went on the trip a year later, I'd go up and every place you stop—probably 10 times a day—for a water break, there would be a pile of those energy bars on the table. I'd go to grab one, and I'd think, "Well, really, I don't think I really need those," and I'd grab one of the bananas or oranges they had out.

So calories on menus are really an important part of this legislation. We tried, through the amendments, to put some things in order. We thought we were right. One of the amendments—I think it came from the NDP—was all about where you have foods that are similar. I'm thinking of a Dairy Queen, where you go in and they have a sundae and there are 35 flavours: strawberry, raspberry, the normal flavours you see. Then they have a milkshake, and it's the same, and then they have a Blizzard. The amendment would allow, where foods are similar or flavours and calories are similar, that they would be able to put up an average when it was within 15%. Of course this government turned that down.

There was no consideration for the logistics. You can imagine now going through a menu lineup where you might have 400 or 500 items because you have to break down every group that has 35 or so flavours. Really, what's the point? What are we trying to do? We're trying to give people an indication of what reasonably is available in calories when you're buying a food. Whether something is 100 or 105 calories—what you really want to know is, is it 100 or is it 1,000, or is it 200 or 300?

This amendment was turned down—as almost all the amendments were, because they came from the other side. Fast foods are generally set up as drive-throughs, or you run through. How are people realistically going to interpret the information? So, in some ways, you've made this bill probably useless when it comes to certain franchisees, because it's just not practical to do. It's unfortunate, and again, an example of amendments not in place.

I go back to one in the previous session, where you talk about the logic of our amendments and the refusal, I think, to accept them. We had a communication bill where we were talking about the day a contract ran out, the contract was cancelled. The phone number was taken away. We put in an amendment. I use a cellphone, like many people. Everybody here essentially does, except for the member opposite with his white book. But you can imagine. I have friends who have had phones for many years, and the contract's up, but they keep on going. If you're going to lose your number and the phone is being deactivated—it really didn't make any sense.

When we went through amendments, the government talked against that. It didn't make sense. They moved ahead with it. Of course, we went through the days of the McGuinty prorogation in the House, so the bill died on the floor. The bill was resurrected in a new form and, lo and behold, that change was incorporated. To me, that just indicated that the government would not accept—they talk about sending things for amendment, they talk about trying to improve things, but really there's no intention. So you wonder why we spend the hours and hours if they really are not interested, even when, I think, in a case like that, they believed it was a good amendment—but they refused to allow it to be used.

So the calories and the food side—it's a good initiative. Certainly, we're battling with an issue, especially with our youth. But we have to put through meaningful legislation. I look back at one of the previous legislations put in place around healthy foods in cafeterias. Sometimes you have to look beyond the legislation. It's all well-meaning; it's all good news. But when you look through what's happening in our high schools now, children are just leaving the high schools to eat lunch across the road at the local fast-food place, because the food that's now on the menus is no longer something that they'll eat. It's fine to have healthy food around, but you have to have it in a format that people enjoy.

I know in our local high school, if there's some type of trip, they actually close down the cafeteria because they don't have enough people going to the cafeteria to make it worthwhile. A school has 300 or 400 children in it, but you can imagine that there are so many people who travel off the property down to a local spot to eat that that means there's no place to eat. There's the legislation put in place, but it means that actually there's nothing.

I think that there's an important message like that. You have to look at what you're doing with the legislation and what the impact will be. I'm sure that in a lot of cases, it's an unintended consequence, but it would be worthwhile to review and follow up, and say, "Well, there's something that's not working; let's fix that." I think that there's what you call a missed opportunity.

One of the amendments we tried—we received information from some of the franchise establishments, where the legislation really blamed not only the franchisee but the franchiser. I think the legislation was really about trying to ensure that the person who was operating, the owner of the premises, was responsible under the legislation. We tried a number of times to clarify that and to make sure that the legislation—you've got an A&W or you've got a Dairy Queen. We have many of those franchises. If the local operator is doing something that's not standard, how do you go back and charge the person that owns the name? That's what we're talking about. We think that it really should fall down to the operator, and we thought it just made sense.

When I talk now, moving over to the tobacco side—I come from a family of smokers. My mother and father both smoked, and, I'd say, more than half of my brothers



and sisters. We had a fairly large family. So I saw the effects of cigarettes.

0950

I also saw how hard it was—I don't think there was anybody who didn't try to quit smoking. I look back now—after many years, I've had a number of brothers and sisters who have quit—and I remember my dad often trying to quit smoking. At the time, it was probably more of a money issue back in the 1960s, when we were growing up. There wasn't a lot of money in the farm, and cigarettes were something that I think he looked at and knew that it just wasn't worth the money. He would constantly try to quit, but it was just something he couldn't do.

I think you have to somewhat appreciate a generation of people who grew up when there was nothing really wrong with cigarettes. They were promoted; they were a great tax revenue for the government. Really, it only came up in the 1970s and the 1980s, when people started to realize there were other issues. So I feel sometimes that we're beating these people up.

I go by the local hospital, and I see we're outlawing these cigarettes on provincial properties. I think, again, you have to look at what you're doing. You see patients now, sitting on the sidewalk, smoking. These are people, I'm sure, who would love to quit smoking. There's generally a grass area that's a few hundred feet. What are we accomplishing? What are we trying to do here? Can we not force them outside the building, and allow them to smoke with some privacy, away from people? I guess they're a group that can be beat up, and I think that's just why we're doing it.

On the alternative side, we go by schools and we allow our children, who are under 19, to actually smoke in public. We give them the place; we give them a nice little area where nobody can bother them. Teachers and principals can't watch who is there. I've talked to principals who say they know very well that that's the centre where students are buying contraband and where they're buying other drugs, and there's an unintended consequence that could easily be changed. If we're really trying so hard to stop smoking, let's just make it illegal for children under 19 to smoke. We do it with alcohol, and we're quite successful. All we've done now is we've given the cool place to be, and in a lot of cases, we've actually increased smoking at that level, because we've given them a place to go.

Further with this idea of the nanny state, you can't smoke in parks now. So you get parents—I don't smoke, myself, but I know people who smoke, and they would love to quit. So here is an opportunity for them to take their children out to a park, but now they can't smoke in the park. I guess you can close your eyes, but all that really means is there will be less opportunities for the children to get out. It was something that served people; you got fresh air for the children. The idea is novel, but you've got to look at—we've got a nanny state here that's really watching over everybody's shoulder. Just what are you trying to do?

On the other hand, you've got the contraband problem that really is a more serious issue. In our area, they've done some testing: The vast majority of cigarettes that our young people are smoking are contraband, yet there's nothing being done here. If you really wanted to take some action, go after these illegal cigarettes. Get rid of the location where you're allowing the contraband dealers to come in and sell their wares. Take some action.

We're looking at more than a billion dollars of lost revenue a year, due to contraband. We've got legislation here that, in many ways, will only increase the amount of contraband that's being sold in this province.

Menthol is a good example. A majority of people in this province smoke menthol cigarettes. Studies have shown that if we just eliminate that—and they're not doing it on day one; they're going to allow that to be done through regulation, so we really don't know what that means, because we don't see regulation. It just happens under the government. They've said that they'll seek the menthol from contraband sources. Stats show that there are more varieties of menthol in contraband than there are in the regular types of cigarettes that you can buy legally. So there's an example where the market bears out what people know: The ban on menthol will only lead to problems.

Some \$1.1 billion is lost to contraband. You wonder what that would do. It would hire 18,000 nurses in a year. It would pay for almost 24,000 long-term-care beds or provide home care to almost 72,000 patients.

This is a time when we could use this money. We have people in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry who can't find long-term-care beds. We're sending them outside the region, yet this government tries to tell people—for those who will believe them—that we have more beds than we need. And yet, every day we're trying to help people out, sending them more than an hour away from their home to find a place where they could actually be given long-term-bed service.

We'd like to allow the menthol a little bit of time, and just really wonder about the benefits of that when so many people smoke. Again, these people are smoking legally. We know that all we're going to do is drive them to an area where we don't want them to go.

I think it's time that we start working and looking at the unintended consequences. We've seen time and time again a government that puts through regulation, walks away and doesn't look in the rear-view mirror to see just what they've done. Smoking numbers have gone to lower levels, but now they've started to bounce back up, and they're bouncing back up with our youth, so what we're doing is not working. We can make it tougher to buy them legally, but they're not buying them legally in the first place. Why we think that's going to make a difference, I'm not sure, because these are an illegal product to be sold to children under 19.

When you look at the stats—they can easily pick up the butts; they know whether they're legal cigarettes or contraband—in my area it's something over 70% of the cigarettes are actually contraband. You can do all you

want, but if you're not attacking the source, you're not really going to have any issues.

E-cigarettes are also something that concern us. This is a product that, for people who are trying to reduce their smoking, has been proven successful. Studies or science so far show that there are no negative effects from e-cigarettes. I think all we're doing is taking away a tool from the people who are really trying to stop; it's a nasty habit. I think it's time we really work with them and give them the options.

I have a letter from a consumer: "As a consumer of menthol cigarettes, I'm urging you to reverse the government's decision to ban menthol in Ontario. We've been purchasing these products for many years and don't understand the reason to ban them now. I don't expect the ban to change my smoking habits, and I'm sure people will simply find these products elsewhere. I agree that young people should not be smoking, but banning menthol will not help achieve this goal." This is a menthol issue.

"Hello, sir. I've recently established a retail outlet selling PV products in Cornwall. I would like to address the proposed Bill 45 regarding e-cigarettes and the effects on the industry, human health and our facility. Our studies and many others worldwide show that electronic cigarettes are the most effective stop-smoking aid available. Treating e-cigarettes as tobacco is dangerous to the industry and people's health and freedoms, and just plain scientifically inaccurate. I would like to request a short discussion."

These are people who have come forth and talked about e-cigarettes. I have another one here questioning the logic of this government; I know sometimes it's hard to figure out the logic. But I think we have a great tool here with e-cigarettes.

I think the words of the minister were that we know there's no science to suggest they are dangerous, but we're going to ban them and then we'll review in the future. That's the first time I've heard that logic used, but I think it's very telling of this government that doesn't like to use the science. It has hurt us in many areas, including the energy sector. I think it's time to review the science and look at what's really good for the province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's my pleasure to contribute to the debate today on Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act.

I just want to mention a few facts. The average Canadian visited restaurants 184 times in 2007. On average, Canadians prepare and eat at home only two of every three meals. Many restaurant foods contain high levels of calories and sodium. There's also a wide variation among similar dishes at different restaurants.

**1000**

The other piece here is another interesting fact: 35% of the sugar that Canadians consume comes from added sugars, such as soft drinks and candy, as opposed to naturally occurring sugars in fruits, vegetables and milk. For

kids, almost half of their daily sugar intake, which is 44%, is now coming from beverages, and soft drinks are the primary source of sugar in beverages for children aged nine to 18.

The other important thing to know is that income inequality is growing in Ontario, making it harder for families to afford healthy food. Eating healthy food is expensive for Ontario families and not always available. It is often more convenient and more affordable for families to eat fast food or high-calorie processed food, which is readily available in any corner store and in vending machines.

Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. People are accessing takeout foods, eating prepackaged foods, going to restaurants much more frequently. There is a need for this bill, and I think it's important that we recognize that. I'm glad to see that it is coming to the Legislature for third reading. It's a shame that our critic France Gélinas's 17 amendments—16 of those were voted down. I know France is very passionate about this bill, and she made some really good suggestions.

Despite that, I'm glad to see it's here and going to be passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** As a former educator, I think this bill is very important for young people. Evidence shows that children are more obese than they ever were and that their lifespan is not going to be as long as this generation's, and that is because of their eating habits mainly and their sedentary activity.

We know that healthy kids grow up to be healthy adults, and a healthy start is better for our kids. It's better for our health care system as well. That's why Bill 45 would make it easier for families to make healthy and informed choices by making Ontario the first province to require chain restaurants to post calories. More and more, people with their busy lifestyles tend to turn to going to restaurants or takeout food for their evening meals, and quite often lunch as well.

We are proposing that only calories be posted on the menus as this more closely aligns with a commitment under the Healthy Kids Strategy to reduce obesity in children, since calorie consumption is a major determinant of weight.

No other jurisdiction has ever required that sodium be displayed on menus. While other jurisdictions provide strong evidence that calorie postings alter consumers' behaviour, there is no such evidence for posting sodium. Providing too much information on the menu can be counterproductive, as research has shown, and it can be confusing to the consumer.

I believe that Bill 45 is the right way for us to go and will keep our future generations healthier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I, too, am pleased to add my voice to Bill 45.



Look, I think it's a bill that heads in the right direction, but I really look forward to the opportunity to be able to discuss some of those things that our member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry spoke about, including menthol cigarettes and contraband tobacco—especially the contraband tobacco side of what will and, sadly, will likely continue to happen.

To me, this is all about choices. It's all about choices in your life. I grew up in an Italian community. We'd get home from school, go to my grandmother's house at 4:30 every day until my folks came home, and we had something called "friselle." I'm sorry, Hansard; I won't know how to spell "friselle." It's week-old bread that's hard as a rock, that you run under water and cover with oil, oregano, tons of salt and pepper. That's what we were given as snacks every night until we had dinner. That's how we grew up. Of course, it's how I got to 220 pounds as a young kid.

Before I ran for mayor of the city of North Bay, I was indeed 220 pounds. I began to visit my naturopath, and I want you to know that today, at 167 pounds, I feel healthy. Most here have never seen me at anything but 167 pounds.

It's all about the choices that we make. Nobody regulated me into doing it. I knew intuitively, I knew instinctively that going to a hamburger place and having a big hamburger was not a good thing for me. I knew that doing it twice a day was a really bad thing, or doing it even twice a week was a bad thing. I didn't need to be regulated, Speaker. I just needed to have that rude awakening that your own health is so important, and to live in moderation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to stand up once again to speak to Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act. I've been in the House a couple of times during debate through the different readings.

To the member from Nipissing's point about having a choice and not being regulated: The important thing is that when you're making choices, you're making informed choices. One of the amendments that the New Democrats would like to see to the bill was to add sodium labelling, so that when somebody walks into a restaurant they can actually make an informed choice about what they're eating.

I found it interesting that during debate it was the member from Scarborough Southwest—so, from the government side—and then again I believe it was the member from Mississauga—Streetsville, from the government side, who both stood up during debate and acknowledged the importance of sodium labelling. I believe it was the member from Mississauga—Streetsville who said, "Well, just not now. It's important, but just not now."

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Right now. Right now.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It is important right now. Yet, when it came up from the New Democrats—and many people who came to present to the committee said, "It's important, it should be now"—the government side said,

"No, it's not important. We're not going to accept the amendment." Once again, they say they're open to listening, yet many people came forward and said it's important to include sodium labelling, and that was shot down. It's not included.

The member from Barrie spoke about being a former educator and how important it is to educate people. I think that a good step forward is regulating the e-cigarettes so that we're not seeing kids getting into using them and then moving on to tobacco products, but also making sure things are properly labelled so people are educated and they can make informed choices. Often people go into a restaurant and they think they're making a healthy choice, only to find out that something was actually full of sugar or full of sodium. I think the sodium labelling is incredibly important.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry has two minutes.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I thank the members from London—Fanshawe, Barrie, Nipissing and Windsor West.

The member from London—Fanshawe was talking about sugar versus natural sugar. I remember when I was helping out at Tim Hortons for a fundraiser, people came in and asked for triple-triple coffee. There's about three-quarters cream and sugar in a triple-triple. I was somewhat surprised. Many of the truck drivers—anyway, it's just surprising when you look at the amount of cream; I think it's 19% cream, so it's strong stuff.

The member from Barrie talked about using the science. I would encourage the government to use the science, because it's too often that we find they haven't, and the consequences are severe, like the Green Energy Act.

We talk about too much information. I just think of some of these fast-food places, what they've required as far as calories for the different flavours. You can imagine. I gave the Dairy Queen example. All these companies have many different flavours, and they have to list every one with the number of calories, according to this legislation. They refuse to amend that. I think there's an example of—just what's realistic? I don't think that is realistic. It will make the billboard so complicated that either they'll have to cut back on what they offer or people won't understand it. I think it's as simple as that.

The member from Nipissing was talking about the new, slim Vic. It's like "Flick Your Bic" used to be the ad. He talked about giving the tools that people need to lose weight. I think this bill—that's why we're supporting it—in general does some of that.

The member from Windsor West, I think she's like me: She's somewhat surprised how little they are open to amendments. I think there was an opportunity to improve the bill, but it passed by.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1010 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before we do introduction of guests, I would like to acknowledge that there are quite a few guests today and that we use discretion on how much we use the introduction in making announcements. So please keep it short, and we'll get everybody in.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to introduce Julia Stark, Ken Loucks and Deborah Barker from the local Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound Alzheimer Society, and Rosemary Corbett from the Ontario Alzheimer Society.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I'd like to welcome Marija Padjen, Julie Foley and Rebekah Churchyard from the Alzheimer Society of Toronto, and also, from my riding, Joanne Oxley; Pam and Stephen Oxley; Eli Park; and John Park, who just became a Canadian citizen.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** I'd like to introduce, from the Alzheimer Society, Ed Harper, Chantal Ogradnick, Maureen O'Connell and Debbie Islam, all from the riding of Barrie. Mr. Harper is a former MP. I'd like to welcome them here today.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I had a great meeting with Advocis this morning. I'd like to introduce Sean Lawrence, Jacques Duplain, David McGruer, Brandon Durant, Jack McAuley, Angela Houle, Rob Stewart and Roger Rhodes. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I would like to welcome today the aunt of our page captain, Mira Gillis. Her name is Ada Mio, and she's in the public gallery this morning.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** In the members' west gallery today, we have seven members of Advocis from the great riding of Peterborough: Linda Gratton, Mimi Rogers, Judy Ruttle, Shawn Flannigan, David Jolley, Alex Fischer and Doug Boden. Of course, they're having their meetings and reception later this afternoon here at Queen's Park.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise and welcome Shelley Green and the Alzheimer Society of Oxford to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** From the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, board member—and also a resident of Burlington—Ted Wheatley. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'd like to welcome representatives from the Alzheimer Society. From my riding here today are Jennifer Gillies, Caitlin Agla, Robin Smart, and Gerard and Monique Laderoute. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I would like to introduce four representatives from the Alzheimer Society of Durham Region who are also constituents of mine: Michelle Pepin, Denyse Newton, Bill Lewis and Mike Browne. They're here today for Alzheimer's day. Welcome.

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'd like to introduce the Ontario Alzheimer Society. We have a number of members in the House, as we've heard. I'd also like to invite all members to join me at their reception after question period in room 230.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'd like to welcome a good friend of mine from Kitchener, Dennis Yanke, who's here with Advocis today. From the Alzheimer Society in

KW, Jennifer Gillies, Caitlin Agla, Robin Smart, and Gerard and Monique Laderoute.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I also have guests to introduce from the Alzheimer Society in Hamilton: Connie Bier, Donna McGillivray, Phyllis Fehr and Mary Burnett.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I'd like to welcome, from the Alzheimer Society in the wonderful riding of Kingston and the Islands, Vicki Poffley and Janice White.

I'd also like to welcome Will Britton, the president of the Kingston chapter of Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada; and Ed Bettencourt, Kingston chapter's advocacy chair.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I would like all members to help me welcome some very special guests today. Len and Suzy Rodness, co-chairs of Magna Carta Canada, have joined us today with students from Waterdown District High School and also from Toronto Prep School.

With them are their teachers Nick Bridges, Carl Draksler, Nathan Tidridge, Paul Sischy, Matt Mooney and Steve Tsimikalis.

These students have come today at the request of the Speaker, being able to appreciate the value of the Magna Carta.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I hope everyone will join me in welcoming Darren Sweeney and Kevin Bewick. Like many others, Darren and Kevin are here today for the Advocis day at the Legislature. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to welcome our friends from Advocis: David McGruer, David Juvet, Roger Thorpe, Dennis Yanke, Roger McMillan, Greg Pollock, Linda Gratton, Al Jones, Aaron Keogh, David Coad and Mimi Rogers. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to welcome, from Bay of Quinte Advocis, Shannon Neely.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** The folks from the Alzheimer Society from the Windsor area today will be Sally Bennett Olczak, Marjorie Brown and Tom Noble; and from Advocis, Aaron Keogh and Michellyne Mancini.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I too want to welcome all of the members of Advocis. But I also want to welcome—I'm not sure they're here yet, but I'd like to introduce Varda Feiner and her grandson Isaac Feiner, who I met at the Israeli Independence Day reception. I invited them to join us. I know you will welcome them when they come in.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to welcome Mr. Loren Freid. He is president of the York region Alzheimer Society, one of the 18 societies from all around Ontario that are here today. Welcome.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'd like to welcome Lorraine LeBlanc and Janet Gasparini from the Alzheimer Society in Sudbury. They're here today for advocacy.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd like to welcome Kathy Wright, the executive director of the Alzheimer Society of Ottawa, with us today.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'd like to introduce two amazing ladies from the Huron Alzheimer Society: Cathy



Ritsema and Linda Finkbeiner. I'd also like to welcome Al Jones from Advocis.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to welcome Mario Spagnuolo, who is the first vice-president of the greater Essex local of ETFO, which represents English public teachers in my area.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to welcome two good friends from Advocis: Nithy Ananth, and Percy up there. I also want to welcome all of the members of the Ontario Lung Association who are here today to support Bill 45.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I'd like to welcome the hundreds of people who are arriving here at Queen's Park today as part of the Enough is Enough hydro protest over escalating hydro rates.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Next week is the day against transphobia. I'm very happy to introduce my friends from the trans lobby: Susan Gapka, Davina Hader, Andrew Fraser, Shadmith Manzo and Crystal Manzo. I hope the House will give them a warm welcome.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** It is my great pleasure to acknowledge and introduce page captain Samantha Lin, from my riding. She is accompanied today by her father, Bo Lin, who is sitting in the public bleachers. Welcome.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** From the Alzheimer Society in Niagara: Nancy Rushford, Bea Kraayenhof, Maisie Jackson and David Jackson.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd like to introduce, from the Alzheimer Society of Perth County, executive director Debbie Deichert and Alzheimer champion Deb Scholl.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I have two introductions. I'd like to welcome, from the great riding of York South-Weston, Zakiya Tafari, who is the executive director of Young and Potential Fathers; and his lovely daughter, Nyashia Tafari. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Also, welcome to Drinks Ontario. We have Heather MacGregor, the executive director; Chris Churchill, president; Andrew von Teichman, vice-president; John Swan, director; and Alex Patinios, chair of the government relations committee. I'd like to welcome them all to Queen's Park. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to welcome, from the Alzheimer Society of Muskoka and Parry Sound, Karen Quemby and Shelley Raymond, and also Vic Prendergast, who I think is from Brantford.

Also, I'd like to welcome, from Advocis, Bruce Boivin, who is from Huntsville, and Jeff Schreiter and Al Jones, who I met with this morning.

**Hon. David Oraziatti:** I'd like to introduce Eric Barton, who is from my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, from Estate Guard Life, who is here on behalf of Advocis.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Please join me in welcoming Elaine Griffin and Diane Cowen from the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County.

1040

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm pleased to introduce to the House two of my constituents: Katherine and Michael Duncan. They are here with us today as we host Alzheimer's day at Queen's Park. Bienvenue.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'm excited to welcome Broadlands Public School here to the Legislature today.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, please welcome Zeeshan Adhi who is visiting Queen's Park for the very first time.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** On behalf of the member from Nickel Belt, I'd like to welcome Lorraine LeBlanc and Janet Gasparini from the Alzheimer Society in Sudbury.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I'd like to welcome a grade 10 class from Campbellford high school, accompanied by teachers Ms. DeGagne, Ms. Campbell and Mr. Milligan, a former MPP from the 40th Parliament.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine from St. Paul's: Rosemary Corbett, who is the president of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? The member from Prince Edward-Hastings is going to step on my announcement—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** No, I won't do that. But I just wanted to warn the members of cabinet that if they hear, "Do the honourable thing, Minister," coming from behind them—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** This is great. I better get order before question period.

To maintain my tradition: The member from Northumberland-Quinte West in the 40th Parliament, Mr. Rob Milligan, is in the gallery.

We also have with us today, representatives of the Brant Alzheimer association: Mary Burnett, Phyllis Fehr, George Montani, Karyn Montani, Jeanette Tootell and, a friend, Vic Prendergast. Welcome.

If you look up, you will see bodies there—with us today in the Speaker's gallery are four interns from Quebec, as part of the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant foundation internship program, to learn about the way we do things here. Welcome to Queen's Park.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, escalating hydro rates are having a devastating effect on people here in Ontario. People from my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and all across Ontario are struggling because of the mess you've made of the energy system. Skyrocketing rates are having a devastating effect on real people. They're having to make hard choices. They're having to choose whether to heat or eat. This is because under your disastrous Green Energy Act, you continue to sign contracts for expensive, intermittent, unreliable power. This is forcing hundreds of thousands of families into untenable circumstances.

Minister, how many more hundreds of thousands will be energy poor if you continue down your disastrous path?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I welcome the question. Certainly, hydro rates are a very topical issue. We understand that the investments we made to take a dirty and unreliable system and make it clean and reliable are putting pressures on Ontario families, particularly electric heat in rural areas.

But to help families with their energy bills, we announced further price mitigation measures in our budget—which neither of the opposition parties supported, incidentally—removing the debt retirement charge by the end of this year, two years earlier than planned, saving the average family \$70 per year on their hydro bills, and the Ontario Energy Board is implementing the Ontario Electricity Support Program for low- and modest-income families that will save them an average of \$360 per year off their bills or \$430 when combined with the removal of the DRC.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of other programs, which I'll talk to in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the minister: People have had enough with your government's unaffordable hydro rates. They have come here today from all across Ontario to express their frustration and to let you know that they are fed up. They are here today to tell you that they cannot afford energy at 16.1 cents a kilowatt hour, or what you have dismissively called a cup of coffee.

You are forcing them to choose between heating their homes or putting food on the table. These victims of your reckless energy policies desperately need you to finally show some understanding and compassion.

Minister, will you go out after question period today and face the people you have caused so much harm to, or will you just continue to ignore them?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. Stop the clock.

I'm now going to implement what I have done last week and this week. The person who starts to talk while I'm standing is going to be named.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I have indicated to my staff that, if they can make arrangements with representatives of the group that will be here today, I would be happy to meet with them in one of the rooms here at Queen's Park or in my office across the way.

We have had tremendous pressure because we've put big investments into the system.

I have a quote here from the member for Simcoe-Grey, former energy minister Jim Wilson. This is the quote that says, "This summer when we didn't have enough electricity in this province," when that government was in power, "and all the air conditioners were running, we had to buy power.... I had to pay \$7 million one day to keep the air conditioners on in our hospitals."

That's what the acting leader said when he was Minister of Energy.

Since that time, we've invested \$34 billion in the system. Not only that, what we did is provide significant mitigation measures to counter those significant investments—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary. The member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Your government continues to claim that Ontario's electricity rates are amongst the most competitive in North America. The fact is that's not accurate. I've sent a provincial comparison of hydro rates to every member of this Legislature that reveals the true cost of the mess that you've made. Ontario's not even remotely competitive. Our all-in hydro cost is more expensive than any other province in Canada. We pay double what Manitoba pays; we pay triple what Quebec pays.

Minister, enough is enough. Will you stop making up your own facts and finally be honest with the people of Ontario and admit that your failed hydro policy has led to the most expensive hydro in the land?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm going to mention a number of programs which we never hear the members opposite mention. The Ontario Clean Energy Benefit is still in place, which represents a 10% discount off the average consumer's bill. We have the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, which can give a senior up to \$1,131 per year off their electricity rate. We have the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program in place today, the saveON-energy Home Assistance Program and, for the northerners, the Northern Ontario Energy Credit.

They will send out messages to their constituents with all the rhetoric about high prices. You will never once see them in any of their householders list all the benefits—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —and all the mitigation measures that they can obtain in the system. They don't talk about the good side; they only talk about the bad side.

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Time and time again we have asked you to take action to fix skyrocketing hydro rates in this province and you've done nothing. Now, with your removal of the clean energy benefit and the latest 15% increase in time-of-use pricing, Ontarians will have to pay an extra \$205 for hydro next year.

People are fed up with your rate increases and they've come here to tell you face to face. Premier, will you join with me and my colleagues after question period on the front lawn and explain to the hundreds of people gathered there—concerned ratepayers—why their hydro rates continue to skyrocket?



1050

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Energy will want to speak to the supplementary, but as the Minister of Energy has said, he is going to be meeting with some of the folks from the group who are outside because it's very important that the people who are concerned about this issue get the whole story; that they get the whole story about the mitigations that have been put in place by our government.

The reality is that we had to make the investments in the energy system that we have made in order for it to be reliable.

When I ran for office in 2002-03—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, I wish I could find the one who said that.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** When I ran for office in 2002-03, door after door, people were worried about the reliability of the system; they were worried about whether the lights were going to go on because of the brownouts and blackouts that were happening across the province. We've dealt with that. We have a reliable system, and we need that in order for our residents and our businesses to be able to thrive.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Back to the Premier: Nepean—Carleton residents are also paying sky-high hydro bills like elsewhere in the province. They've been subjected to not just infrastructure improvements but to a disastrous wind energy scam, the smart meter debacle, cancelled gas plants and a growing, inefficient Hydro bureaucracy.

They're paying more for their hydro bill today because this government is making a mess out of the hydro system. All of this while some of my residents in Nepean—Carleton are serviced by Hydro One, while others are serviced by the less expensive and better-managed Hydro Ottawa. Both the chair of Hydro Ottawa and the mayor of Ottawa have reached out to the province for a more equitable arrangement for hydro users in rural and suburban Ottawa.

Will the Premier commit today to a better electricity arrangement for the rural residents and suburban residents of Ottawa so that they can be serviced by Hydro Ottawa?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to wade into the details of that discussion. As the member opposite knows, there will be a new board in place at Hydro One, and it will be up to that company, which will be an improved and more efficient company, to deal with those issues.

I want to go to a comment that the member made at the beginning of her question. She talked about her constituents being subjected to infrastructure improvements. That is a very, very telling phrase. What it says is that that party and the people across the floor don't believe in improving infrastructure; don't believe in making updates to the electricity system—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's coming from both sides, but the member from Nepean—Carleton asked the question. Come to order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like an answer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It sounds to me like the member is challenging the chair. Would you like to do that?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** No. I was just challenging the Premier.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You are now challenging me.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite fundamentally believes that making the kinds of upgrades that were needed in the electricity system, investing in the infrastructure that is needed in this province, is not the way to go and, in fact, it subjects Ontarians to some kind of hardship. We categorically reject that argument.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, final supplementary.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** To the Minister of Energy: As you're aware, long-term-care operators across Ontario are facing major increases in their hydro bills. Nursing homes do not have sufficient ongoing funding to keep up with your skyrocketing electricity rates. As a result, service levels will decline and the 100,000 vulnerable seniors housed there will suffer.

Minister, will you stand in your place today and give assurance that you will fix your hydro mess and stop forcing seniors' homes to use care funding to offset the effect of your skyrocketing electricity rates?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I indicated earlier today a quote from the member from Simcoe—Grey about the mess the system was in. We've invested \$34 billion into the system. It was a dirty system; it's now a clean system. It's a healthy system from those investments.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The system was not reliable. There were blackouts and brownouts across the province of Ontario under that administration. We have a system that is clean; we have a system that is reliable as a result of those investments. Yes, it has put pressure on prices.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Second time for the member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I've listed the mitigation measures we've put in place and we're continuing to put in place with the new low-income support program and taking the debt retirement charge off.

That government made the mess. They have no positive recommendations whatsoever other than to stand there and yell and scream. That's disgraceful.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Everyone knows that this government has never met a panel or a study that it didn't like. In 2013, the Liberal government had over 30 panels and studies. Since January of this year, the government has had 18 more that have been initiated, including one about where to sell Bud Light in the province of Ontario.

Now, it appears that last week the Liberals finally changed their ways and they decided to ram the Hydro One sell-off through the Legislature without any real public scrutiny or debate at all. Yesterday they rang bells so that the House couldn't debate the fact that the Premier was shutting down democracy in this chamber.

Can the Premier explain why it is that she's spending months upon months on public consultations on new systems for how to pay traffic tickets, but shutting down debate on Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I appreciate the question. I think the member opposite knows quite well the amount of debate that has taken place on our budget bill, Building Ontario Up, and not to mention the amount—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You rang bells on your own debate. What are you talking about?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay will come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you, Speaker. That's not to mention the amount of public hearings that had taken place before the tabling of the budget.

As has been mentioned before, the Minister of Finance had about six pre-budget consultations held across Ontario. It was in cities and towns like Windsor, London, Toronto, Mississauga, Cambridge and Ottawa. And the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs visited towns like Fort Frances, Sudbury, Ottawa, Cornwall, Fort Erie, Toronto and London to speak to Ontarians and make sure that budget—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In not one of those public consultations did this government or did any of those MPPs admit to the people that they were going to be selling off Hydro One. That is the fact. Every single person and every single business in this province will pay for the privatizing of Hydro One. Bills have already quadrupled since privatization began in this province, and there's only going to be a faster increase in rates if Liberals go ahead with the privatization of Hydro One.

But Ontarians won't get their say at hearings, nor will their elected representatives be able to get any opportunity, because in less than an hour—in less than an hour from right now—the Liberals are going to pass a closure

motion and shut down democratic process in this Legislature.

My question is, why is this Premier so disrespectful of this Legislature, and why has she no intention to listen to the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** This government—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carry on.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** This government and this Premier are always listening to the people, and in consultation after consultation after consultation from the people of Ontario, they are telling us that they want their government to invest in infrastructure. They are telling us that they want their government to invest in public transit and transportation infrastructure across the province. They're telling us that we need to invest in critically important infrastructure like roads and bridges. What the opposition is doing is they are denying that reality by not wanting to invest in infrastructure and, in fact, delaying those very critical investments that are such a key part of our budget, Building Ontario Up.

That is what the Premier is doing: She's making an unprecedented investment, \$130 billion over 10 years, in infrastructure so that we continue to build Ontario up and prepare our province for success in the 21st century.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier has spent months and months consulting and studying how people pay parking tickets in the province of Ontario. She's spending months trying to figure out where to sell a 12-pack of Bud Light, but when there is an issue that affects every single Ontarian—skyrocketing hydro bills—the Premier shuts down democratic debate and refuses to hear from people.

1100

It's clear that this Premier will do anything and everything to avoid transparency and to avoid accountability. She is shutting down debate in the Legislature. She's ringing bells. She's ramming through her Hydro sell-off right through this House. Why is the Premier refusing to hear from Ontarians who can't afford her Hydro sell-off?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, with all due respect, we disagree with the leader of the third party, because we are having very robust debate on this budget bill right in this House. Not to mention, we have proposed to have six days of hearings in the committee, way more hearings than any other opposition parties, when they were government, ever conducted in the committee.

Let me remind the member opposite: When her party was in office, how much time did they give their budget documents to be debated and considered in the committee? In 1991, the NDP—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Right on the edge. Finish, please.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** In 1991, the NDP allowed for only one day of committee consideration on the budget bill; in



1992, only one day of budget consideration in the committee; in 1993 and 1994, zero days.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Not on Hydro.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, come to order.

New question.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. The Premier is cutting half a billion dollars out of education. On top of that, schools are going to have to pay the price for the selling off of Hydro. The Liberal Minister of Education was right when she—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Liberal Minister of Education was right when she said, “The privatization of Hydro One will further exacerbate already underfunded school board budgets.”

My question is this: What is the Premier going to do? What is she going to cut out of our kids’ education next so that school boards can afford to keep the lights on and the schools warm during the winter?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I’m not sure whether to start with a lesson on fractions where 248—anyway.

Could we talk about this whole issue, though, of—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** If you look back at the time, you would find that everybody, including the government of the day’s own consultant, agreed that school boards were underfunded by \$1 billion. Since I made that statement, we have added \$8 billion.

Now, another thing you might like to know, Speaker, was that in the original funding formula, the transfer to school boards to pay the utilities had actually been frozen.

We have changed that. We now increase the funding every year so that boards can pay for the utilities and that’s no—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Hospital budgets in Ontario have had eight years of funding that hasn’t even kept up with inflation, and for four years those budgets have been frozen—four years in a row.

Hospitals are also going to have to grapple with paying the price for the privatization of Hydro One. When hydro bills skyrocket, hospitals are going to have to find that money somewhere. What’s the Premier going to cut out of hospitals next so that they can keep their lights on and maintain the medical equipment that people rely on to keep their lives safe and well?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Speaker, under this government, the school board funding has gone up 56%. The funding per pupil has gone up 59%. Just as a matter of infor-

mation, teachers’ wages have gone up 24.5%. The cost of living has gone up 21%. I think she better check her math.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Start the clock.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** All Ontarians need to do is look at the chaos in the school system: Nothing to crow about, Minister.

Hydro bills will skyrocket if the Premier privatizes Hydro One. It means families and businesses are going to be paying more, but it also means that school boards are going to be paying more. It means that hospitals are going to be paying more. It is going to hurt service agencies. It is going to hurt not-for-profits. If they pay a hydro bill, they’re going to pay more. Groups that help the most vulnerable and that have to be careful with every dime will be paying the price for this Liberal Premier’s sell-off of Hydro One.

Will she stop that sell-off today and do right by the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Let’s look at the context in which I was concerned about the privatization, the sell-off of Hydro One. In that context, the Tories were going to sell off 100% in a fire sale, all at the same time. That’s not what we’re doing.

What we’re doing is retaining 40% ownership. We’re not selling it all at once in a fire sale; we’re doing it in a measured way, no more than 15% at a time, so that we can maximize—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** One wrap-up sentence, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** In fact, the context is totally different, and I stand by our school board funding compared to either of the other parties opposite.

#### WEARING OF BUTTONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

The opportunity was missed earlier. I beg your indulgence for a request for unanimous consent for the wearing of buttons. I will ask for that request now to ensure that we all fall within the guidelines of the House.

The member from Halton.

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** Thank you, Speaker. I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent for members to wear buttons in recognition of the Ontario Alzheimer Society.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton is seeking unanimous consent to wear the buttons for Alzheimer’s. Do we agree? Agreed.

Buttons are made available to all caucuses on each side of the House.

We will now resume question period.

New question.

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is to the Premier. We all know that the three striking school boards have filed a motion with the labour relations board, and we really believe that's a waste of time.

The bottom line is that the Liberal government is responsible for the issues that will get the students back in the classroom. The two-tiered Bill 122 is the real problem. The buck stops with Minister Sandals, and it is the Wynne Liberals who are failing Ontario students.

Premier, will you finally take responsibility and get—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sorry for the interruption. The discussions that are going on between other members are not acceptable. It stops. The member has to put his question properly.

Carry on.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Premier, will you finally take responsibility, quit dithering and get the students back in the classroom?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite knows that there is a collective bargaining process that is under way. It's a challenging round of negotiations; there is no doubt about that. We have said that there is no new money for compensation. There are issues that the members need to work out, both at the local level and at the central table. The fact is that we need to let that process unfold because where the deal is going to be found is at the table.

I know the member opposite doesn't support the collective bargaining process. That was evident when they were in office. We believe that it is an important part of labour relations, so we support that collective bargaining process. The answers need to be found at the table.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the Premier: Premier, there were no negotiations yesterday. There are no bargaining talks. Some 22,000 students right now have been out of the classroom for their 16th day.

You were supposed to light a fire under the negotiations. We haven't even seen a spark yet. Do you need to borrow some kindling? Maybe we could use that stupid budget you presented.

1110

All we see are helpless school boards taking the heat for your mismanagement. The Liberal government must step up, take responsibility, quit dithering and get the students back in the classroom.

Premier, when will you get the 72,000 students in Ontario back in the classroom? Make it happen today.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I will just say to the member opposite that it is not helpful for the collective bargaining process to be held in public. It has to be a process that happens at the table. It has to be a confidential process.

What I will say to the member opposite is that the OSSTF support staff are actually negotiating today. They are at the table. The conversations that are happening are happening in a confidential manner. The agreements have to be found at the table.

Look, I want the kids back in school. I want the teachers and the support staff in school. That's where they all want to be, and that is where we want them to be. We are doing everything in our power to make sure that we find those agreements at the table. It is a difficult process, and I acknowledge that. But we take responsibility for our role in making that happen, getting those agreements at the table.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier insists that selling Hydro One is essential, even though it pays for less than 3% of her infrastructure promises. But the truth is, it might pay for a lot less than 3%.

Dr. Douglas Peters, chief economist with TD Bank for 26 years and a former federal secretary of state, and his colleague Dr. David Peters say the council "believes that Hydro One could have a value in the marketplace of \$13.5 billion to \$15 billion. We think the council is too optimistic, and that \$10.6 billion is a more likely valuation."

Premier, isn't it true that the net \$4 billion you say will come from your fire sale could, in fact, be a lot lower?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Energy is going to want to speak to the supplementary, but let me just say this: The whole reason we are embarking on this process, the whole reason we ran on reviewing our assets and using them to leverage the building of new assets for this century and for our kids and our grandkids, is that that infrastructure needs to be built.

What we hear from the third party is basically, "Do nothing. Don't do it. Don't make those investments. Don't build those roads and bridges and transit. Just sit back and pretend that somehow our economy is going to grow and that our communities are going to thrive if we don't make those investments." That is not the case, Mr. Speaker. They will not thrive unless we make those investments. That's what government exists to do: put the conditions in place for economic growth and prosperity. That's why we're making those investments—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The Premier says she'll get \$4 billion for selling Hydro One, and the cost is higher hydro bills for families and businesses and Ontarians losing control of an asset that's too important to give away.

And according to senior economists, the truth is that the \$4-billion figure is probably inflated, which means that that money isn't going to make the difference to infrastructure that needs to be made.



Does the Premier have anything other than a wing and a prayer to back up her claim that selling Hydro will give us \$4 billion?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The member opposite is making a lot of speculation which actually harms the opportunities to create greater value—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** That actually precludes us from creating greater value from that corporation.

The bottom line is, we are assessing. We are going to foster the conditions necessary to provide the maximum value for a very precious crown corporation that we all value. In order for us to ensure that we make it secure, we work in the best interests of the public, and that is what we're doing here because we're reinvesting, dollar for dollar, all of that money into another project to generate even more revenue and more returns.

Mr. Speaker, that's in the best interests of the public, and that is what we're doing.

#### AGRICULTURAL TRADE

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. The Cambridge Farmers' Market has operated since 1830, supporting our local farmers. My constituents in Cambridge and North Dumfries township already buy local products, so they were very pleased when the Premier announced her agri-food growth challenge. The challenge aims to double the agri-food sector's rate of growth and create 120,000 new jobs by 2020.

Ontarians working in the agriculture sector, like the many farmers in my riding, are excited about the potential benefits to their businesses. Many agricultural and food companies in my community employ over 50 workers, such as Frito Lay Canada, Loblaw Companies, Dover Flour Mills and Grand River Foods.

Speaker, could the minister tell the House what steps the government is taking to contribute to the agri-food growth challenge?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity, and I want to thank the honourable member from Cambridge for asking the question.

Outreaching to the world is a key driver of our economy. Just last month, I had the pleasure of joining Minister Leal for the first-ever minister-led agricultural trade mission to China. Expanding trade is a key part of developing and strengthening Ontario industries. China is a priority market for Ontario and is one of the province's key Asian markets.

In 2014, Ontario's total agri-food sales to China, including exports to Hong Kong, reached over \$800 billion, representing Ontario's second-largest export market for agri-food products.

Trade missions like these allow us opportunities to showcase Ontario's exports.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you to the minister for sharing an update on the agri-food growth challenge. I'm glad that the minister spoke about his recent mission to China. I think we can all agree that by expanding our trade opportunities, it can only mean good things for our economy. In my riding of Cambridge, over 76% of companies in the food and agricultural sector have reported exporting product to other countries.

Ontario's agri-food sector is, in my opinion, the best in the world. We have some phenomenal products, and they deserve to be showcased worldwide. In particular, trading partners like China need to be able to see what we have to offer.

Speaker, could the minister speak more about the recent mission to China and the benefits that all Ontarians will see as a result?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Of course, I'm happy to do that. Speaker, 20 Ontario businesses and organizations accompanied us to help promote trade opportunities to over 300 Chinese agri-food and government officials. This mission produced some great results for Ontario's agricultural sector.

For example, Futurevic Global Sourcing signed a letter of intent to purchase \$2 million worth of Ontario maple products in the next two years. Pillitteri Estates signed a \$6-million agreement that would bring more Ontario ice wine to China. Vineland Estates Winery announced a retailing and distribution agreement that will see more than \$1 million of its products sold in China.

As well, we have landed three reverse trade missions coming to Ontario later this year.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, too many Ontarians are getting to the point now where they're having to choose between heating and eating.

For one family in North Hastings who contacted my office, energy poverty is a reality. They've set up payment plans twice with Hydro One, only to end up defaulting both times. Last year, when their child had to have surgery and unexpected expenses arose, they found themselves unable to set up further payment plan arrangements. Their complaints fell on deaf ears with the utility. My office had to work to get them a one-month extension. My office has become an unofficial complaints department for Hydro One.

On May 1, just two weeks ago, electricity rates went up by another 15%. Minister, why is your Liberal electricity policy such a failure? Will you fix it and will you stop forcing families to choose between heating and eating?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, for the record, the Ontario Energy Board announced an increase of 4.6%. We've heard many, many other numbers over there.

There are a significant number of people across the province who are finding pressures—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned, whether he's in his seat or not.

1120

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, what I have never seen is any member of the Progressive Conservative Party, such as the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, actually sending out to their constituents the list of all the mitigation measures that are available in the province of Ontario, starting with the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program, the saveONenergy Home Assistance Program and, in the north, a very significant tax credit for customers.

For those people who are stretched financially and it is a serious problem, the LDCs work with them on a one-on-one basis across the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** To the Minister of Energy: Hydro One's smart meter system does not work in rural Ontario, and the system of estimating usage results in chaotic, wrongful hydro bills that are very high, as much as twice as high as neighbours in urban areas that are served by Hydro Ottawa.

When the city was created in 2001, one of the conditions was that all residents of the new city would become customers of Hydro Ottawa. Minister, you can finish the job you should have done 14 years ago, when you were mayor of Ottawa. There are 43,000 Hydro One customers in rural Ottawa. Minister, will you honour the agreement of 2001 and transfer these 43,000 customers to Hydro Ottawa, where they should be?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, there is a systemic problem we have, which was created by former Premier Harris. In 1999, when he legislated amalgamation across the province in the cities of Ottawa, Sudbury, Hamilton and a number of others, he also amalgamated LDCs, but he left stranded in the system Hydro One customers who were within other city boundaries.

Yes, as mayor, I tried to negotiate a solution, as all the other mayors across the province had.

We are now talking to Hydro Ottawa, but we also have to talk to Sudbury, Hamilton and all the other cities where Mike Harris created this problem.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier. Students in Durham, northern Ontario's Rainbow district and Peel region have been without classes for weeks. Over 800,000 elementary students and their families face an uncertain future as educators undertake job action. I'm reminding the Premier of this because it doesn't seem like her government is doing anything to move this process along.

Will the Premier finally acknowledge that the utter failure of contract talks falls at the feet of her government, and actually work to bring school boards and education workers together, rather than driving them apart?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** It's precisely because we want to bring all the parties together that we actually created the new legislation. We wanted to have the boards at the table, we wanted to have the union at the table, we wanted to have the government at the table, so that all three parties can come together and create a solution.

It's precisely because we believe in negotiated solutions that we are still working very, very hard at the table. We have nine different tables going, and we're working very, very hard at each of those tables to get collective agreements. We know it's going to be difficult. We know it has been slow.

We believe that the way to get the issues resolved is at the table, and there's no way to do this other than negotiating solutions, and we will keep working at that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Again to the Premier: It's this government that implemented the current bargaining legislation. It's this government that cut \$250 million in education—Minister, it's on page 230 of your own budget; maybe you should check your facts—and forced the closure of 88 schools and cut vital special education programs.

It's this government's underfunding that put 21 early childhood educator jobs in Windsor and Essex county and 50 educational assistant positions and ECEs in Bruce-Grey on the chopping block. Now this Liberal government is continuing to fail families by dragging their feet in negotiations and blaming everyone else but themselves for the chaos in our schools.

When will this government finally accept responsibility for throwing our schools into chaos and work with education workers—the key word is “with”—to get students back to class?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think we need to go back and look at what happened during the development of our collective bargaining legislation. We actually worked with every one of the unions, with all four school board associations, and we worked together to draft that legislation. We went around and around and around. We looked at first drafts and made some changes. We looked at second drafts. We looked at some changes that the NDP suggested and incorporated some suggestions that the NDP made in terms of the collective bargaining legislation. Everybody involved worked together to make that collective bargaining legislation a reality, and we've worked together to decide which are central issues and which are local issues. That was negotiated. We have minutes of settlement where we've agreed—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.



## RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Ontario's economic landscape is changing. Economic development and job growth in Ontario's small and rural communities continue to face unique challenges.

In my riding of Halton, the Country Heritage Agricultural Society and the Milton Education Village Innovation Centre are two local projects that have benefited from the government's support of rural economic growth. They've used the government's support to develop and promote new business opportunities across the region.

Throughout the province there are programs like these, designed to assist rural communities, including the Eastern Ontario Development Fund and the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, could the minister please update the House on what our government is doing to strengthen rural economies?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member from Halton for her question this morning. I know the great work that she does with the agriculture associations within her riding of Halton.

The RED Program is a program that has transcended various administrations in the province of Ontario. In fact, I believe it was the member from Oxford who actually brought the RED Program into being. It is the Rural Economic Development Program. It provides \$14.5 million on an annual basis, helping rural communities and regions grow their economies, attract investment and invest in their skills.

Through RED since 2003, we've invested over \$180 million in 565 projects, generating over \$1.2 billion in economic activity and indeed creating and supporting over 36,000 jobs in rural Ontario. We'll continue to work and strengthen rural communities in every part of this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** Thank you to the minister for his answer. It's great to hear that the Ontario government takes the economic needs of small and rural communities seriously. I know that business owners in my riding will be happy to know that our government is committed to supporting their goals of providing goods, services and job opportunities for Halton residents.

The RED Program, as you mentioned, has a strong record of job creation, economic growth and helping rural communities prosper across Ontario. But, Minister, I have heard that the RED Program is temporarily pausing application intakes to conduct a review. I'm sure many rural communities will be interested in the types of RED projects that it will now focus on.

Speaker, could the minister please elaborate on the kinds of projects the RED Program will support?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I thank the member from Halton for her supplementary. In fact, the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame, which is a great facility, is actually located in her riding of Halton.

To ensure the RED Program continues to meet expectations for industry, community organizations and municipalities, my ministry is temporarily pausing application intakes to conduct a thorough program review. We know that to be competitive we must become more innovative and flexible. That's why the RED Program will continue to focus on those high-value, low-cost projects that create jobs and build a foundation for economic growth and investment.

**1130**

For example—here's a great one. The Oxford Cattle Co. Ltd. is receiving a half million dollars to implement a pilot fueling hub that creates new natural gas blends to sell to consumers in rural Ontario.

RED projects show off the innovation and community partnerships that are emblematic of rural Ontario. I know by working together, we'll strengthen rural communities right across this great province.

## HYDRO TRANSMISSION

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, your government's delays on a crucial hydro transmission project are costing Leamington jobs and investment. Nature Fresh Farms recently announced that they would be expanding in Ohio. Leamington lost out on 300 jobs and \$200 million in investments because of your government's inaction.

In 2011, I asked former finance minister Dwight Duncan about this issue, and he said, "We're now ready to move to construction." Minister, it's 2015, and no plans have ever been confirmed. Given all the broken promises, local officials are outraged because more businesses are saying they're looking elsewhere.

Minister, Leamington needs to know if you are willing to move this vital power project forward. Are you?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We've adopted a program of responding specifically to the growers in that particular area. We've created combined heat and power. We're going through a—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I'm going to remind both the member from Prince Edward-Hastings and the deputy government House leader that when the mikes are on, you're taking advantage, and I'm not going to let you anymore.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** In fact, we're in the process of doing procurements right now to satisfy that industry in your community.

But we have been rebuilding this system now for the last 10 years because of the mess they made. I want to repeat the quote. This is from the member for Simcoe-Grey in 2001, when he was Minister of Energy: "This summer when we didn't have enough electricity in this province ... and all the air conditioners were running, we had to buy power.... I had to pay \$7 million one day to keep the air conditioners on in our hospitals."

Mr. Speaker, we've invested in a reliable system—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Leader of the Opposition will come to order—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. And the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex will come to order.

Carry on. Wrap up.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We've created a clean and reliable system—so clean that we've taken the equivalent of seven million cars off the road.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member for York–Simcoe.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, it is essential for Ontarians to have access to affordable electricity. Expensive electricity has and will continue to destabilize our province if you don't change direction.

The lights go on; the day begins. Hospital rooms operate. Businesses make money and provide jobs. No one in Ontario can live without electricity. People depend on it.

Minister, your energy policy takes advantage of our dependence on electricity. We are captive consumers. Your policy has destabilized day-to-day life.

Billions wasted on smart meters, the Green Energy Act and clandestine gas plant cover-ups: You just keep handing the ever-increasing bill to ratepayers. Why are you bent on destroying any prospect of affordable electricity, which is so essential to the social and economic value of our province?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Over the course of the last 10 years, we have spent \$34 billion in the system, creating generation, transmission and building a clean system. We've built the new tunnel in Niagara, a \$1.2-billion investment. We've expanded hydro in northern Ontario through the Lower Mattagami, a \$2.6-billion investment in the system.

We have an extremely reliable system, but in the process of rebuilding the system, we have built it clean. We got rid of 25% of our generation, which was dirty coal. We are saving \$4 billion a year on environmental and health costs by creating a clean system. We are one of the best, if not the best, in North America. It's the largest emissions reduction program in North America. It's a record we're proud of, and we're continuing in that direction.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. The Union Pearson Express will run every 15 minutes from 5:30 in the morning to 1 a.m. each night. Heavy, noisy, dirty, diesel trains will run past homes, playgrounds and schools. Yet the government doesn't seem to care about this disruption, even now, with construction ongoing 24/7. It means children can't sleep at night and people can't live in their homes.

What will the government do to address the concerns of residents in all ridings up and down the tracks?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Members will come to order.

The question has been put.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park, not only for the question today, but also for the correspondence that she has sent to me earlier this month. I also want to acknowledge the work of my colleagues the member from York South–Weston and the member from Davenport, who have communicated with me, my ministry and the team at Metrolinx on a regular basis regarding the Union Pearson Express.

I believe the member is aware of the fact that, back in 2012, there was considerable work undertaken by way of a study to determine what kind of noise mitigation was required along this corridor. As a result of the work that was undertaken in that assessment, Speaker, there are a number of noise walls that are under construction. I understand those identified as being required in that initial study are going to be completed by the time the Union Pearson Express comes into service, which of course is June 6.

Work is being undertaken. I know the team at Metrolinx has folks on the ground trying their best to work closely with the members, but also with the community itself.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** The government in this instance is so desperate to get this project done in time for the games that construction crews right now are keeping residents awake all night, 24 hours a day, with jackhammers and heavy equipment. The intense construction is even damaging the foundations of neighbouring homes.

Mr. Speaker, residents want a clear answer and they need one now. What will the government do now to compensate them for construction damage and disruption?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, I thank the member for the question. I didn't point out in my initial answer that in fact Metrolinx has done extensive consultation, working closely with the communities affected by the construction of the Union Pearson Express. For example, Metrolinx publicly recruited members for eight committees and over 150 community members signed up to participate. Metrolinx also conducted 24 committee meetings with the community over the course of that time.

I mentioned the noise mitigation measures that are currently under construction that will continue to be constructed.

Metrolinx also has a property damage claims process to deal with any damage that might arise from this work.

But Speaker, I should point out the Union Pearson Express is a clear example of the wonderful outcome that we can achieve when we work together to build infrastructure. It comes into service on June 6 on time, on budget. For the first time ever, it's a dedicated air-rail link between Union Station and Pearson airport.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.



New question.

### MANUFACTURING SECTOR

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** What a great segue into my question. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, who is doing a great job in helping build Ontario up.

To quote the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, since the global recession, “we’ve seen a rebirth in manufacturing” in Ontario. Last month alone, Ontario’s manufacturing sector gained 1,200 new positions, and almost 800 positions the month before. Our government understands that more work is needed to keep this sector on a positive path forward. Our budget outlines some of that work.

Last night, I held a town hall meeting in my riding of Beaches–East York and was asked about the great programs and initiatives in this year’s budget to help our province’s manufacturing sector continue to grow.

Would the minister please inform this House about how this year’s budget is helping Ontario’s manufacturing sector?

1140

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I must say, the member is doing his share in Beaches–East York as well in building up Ontario and building up his community.

I’m delighted to respond to that, because this budget does so much for our economy and so much for our manufacturing sector. If you go back to 2007, the number one ask of our business community, through the Jobs and Prosperity Council, was to increase the accelerated deduction for investments in manufacturing and processing machinery. We were pleased to do it back then, but this deduction was due to expire in 2015-16.

I’m very pleased that our finance minister saw the wisdom, through this budget, if passed, of extending this important deduction for another 10 years. Why is that important, Mr. Speaker? It’s an incentive for manufacturers to keep investing in upgrading their machinery, investing in upgrading their plants and creating jobs across the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I would really like to thank the minister for that update and especially for continuing the deduction for accelerated depreciation.

It’s important to note that our corporate income tax rate in Ontario is almost 13 percentage points lower than the average rate in the United States, between federal and provincial taxes, and this is partially responsible for Ontario being a top jurisdiction for direct foreign investments. This extended deduction will make Ontario even more competitive as a manufacturing jurisdiction for manufacturers from around the world.

This deduction is not the only program that is helping our province’s manufacturing sector continue to grow. Would the minister please inform the House on these other programs that are included in this year’s budget that will help foster growth in this key Ontario sector and

help create jobs to support all Ontarians and to support our tax revenue base?

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I thank the NDP for their continued heckles all along the way. They’ve got me smiling.

Mr. Speaker, we’ve taken a number of provisions in this budget beyond what I just talked about. For instance, we’re increasing the Jobs and Prosperity Fund by \$200 million to \$2.7 billion. That’s going to help us expand that into the forestry sector, which is important to a number of our northern members. It’s also going to help us to continue to secure those important manufacturing mandates, like Honda’s expansion in Alliston, an \$857-billion investment in this province.

We’re also continuing, in this budget, the Southwestern Ontario and Eastern Ontario Development Funds. Let me talk a little bit about their impact. We’ve invested \$120 million as a government. It has leveraged \$1.3 billion of private sector investment, creating 31,000 jobs.

This budget will continue to create jobs, build our economy and build—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a question to the Premier. Constituents from Parry Sound–Muskoka boarded a bus to Queen’s Park this morning to send you a message: Your government needs to get hydro rates under control. It’s reached the point that people are afraid to open their hydro bill each month.

Among the hundreds of hydro complaints I’ve received, Dana from Trout Creek wrote me: “Huge bills from Hydro One are going to cause us to go bankrupt,” adding that her family’s income is only slightly higher than what qualifies for any form of government assistance.

Instead of providing assurances on hydro rates for Ontario families, this month you raised the on-peak hydro rates 15% to 16.1 cents per kilowatt hour.

Premier, why is your government turning a deaf ear to people like Dana and making no attempt to keep hydro rates from climbing even higher?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of Energy has said repeatedly this morning, in response to questions on this issue, that we’re very acutely aware of the situation where people are struggling, where they need support. That’s why the programs that we have put in place are targeted at those people.

The fact is that we inherited an energy system that was degraded, that needed to be built up. We’ve done that, and there is a cost associated with that. We acknowledge that. But I hope that the member opposite, in his office, when people come in to talk to him about their energy rates—I hope that he points them to the programs that they might qualify for, because he knows full well that

there are programs that are targeted specifically at people who are struggling with their energy bills.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** To the Premier: In Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, hydro's mismanagement of its billing practices, as well as your unaffordable green energy charges, are a source of pain and financial ruin. The local conservation authority received an unjustifiable \$50,000 bill after it had already been removed from its bank account, and it has been fighting Hydro to no avail.

The Maple Ridge Centre was advised that an old meter had been disconnected when in reality it hadn't been, and after two years of paying \$12,000 a year, it received an additional \$25,000 bill that Hydro is refusing to drop.

Across Ontario, individuals, businesses, agencies and charities are having to shoulder the economic costs of your mismanagement of the energy file. How do you justify bringing electricity poverty to the province, which should instead be the economic engine of Canada?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, there have been many questions along this line asked this morning. The Minister of Energy has been very clear about the fact that we had to make investments—there was a degraded energy system; there is a cost associated with those—and that we have worked very hard to put programs in place and to make decisions that actually would take costs out of the system: renegotiating contracts and putting downward pressure on rates.

Underlying this question is a question about the nature of Hydro One and whether that is a company that could be run better. I expect that the member opposite agrees with us that it is a company that could be run better; that we should do everything in our power to make sure it is run well. That is exactly part of the initiative that we are undertaking as a result of the recommendations from Ed Clark and his panel. It needs to be a better-run company for the people of this province.

## ANNUAL REPORT, CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 2013-14 annual report of the Chief Electoral Officer.

## DEFERRED VOTES

## TIME ALLOCATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for allocation of time on Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1147 to 1152.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On May 11, Mr. Naqvi moved government notice of motion 21. Mr. Clark then moved an amendment to Mr. Naqvi's motion. Mr. Bradley then moved an amendment to Mr. Clark's amendment.

We will first deal with Mr. Bradley's amendment to the amendment, which is as follows: That the amendment to the motion be amended as follows—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.

All those in favour of Mr. Bradley's amendment to the amendment, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Meilleur, Madeleine
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Miltzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Kiwaala, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwintier, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Nicholls, Rick
Arnott, Ted	Hatfield, Percy	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Hillier, Randy	Sattler, Peggy
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Hudak, Tim	Singh, Jagmeet
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLaren, Jack	Tabuns, Peter
Fedeli, Victor	MacLeod, Lisa	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Forster, Cindy	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia	Yurek, Jeff
Hardeman, Ernie	Natyshak, Taras	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 56; the nays are 44.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the amendment to the amendment carried.

We will now deal with Mr. Clark's amendment to the motion, as amended, which is as follows: That the motion be amended by deleting everything following "the bill shall"—

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.



Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment, as amended, carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

The motion is carried.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On division.

We will now deal with Mr. Naqvi's motion, as amended, which is as follows: "That, pursuant to standing order 47"—

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion, as amended, carry?

I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carried on division. The motion, as amended, is carried.

*Motion, as amended, agreed to.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

On December 9, 2014, Mr. Naqvi moved second reading of Bill 6.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Baker, Yvan  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Ballard, Chris  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bisson, Gilles  
Bradley, James J.  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Clark, Steve  
Collie, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika

Gélinas, France  
Gravelle, Michael  
Gretzky, Lisa  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Hillier, Randy  
Hoggarth, Ann  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hudak, Tim  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jones, Sylvia  
Kiwala, Sophie  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Marie-France  
Leal, Jeff

Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Natyshak, Taras  
Nicholls, Rick  
Oraziotti, David  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Potts, Arthur  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Sandals, Liz  
Sattler, Peggy  
Scott, Laurie  
Sergio, Mario  
Singh, Jagmeet

Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Dong, Han  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John  
French, Jennifer K.  
Gates, Wayne

MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Malhi, Harinder  
Mangat, Amrit  
Mantha, Michael  
Martins, Cristina  
Martow, Gila  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McDonell, Jim  
McGarry, Kathryn  
McMahon, Eleanor  
McMeekin, Ted  
Meilleur, Madeleine

Smith, Todd  
Sousa, Charles  
Tabuns, Peter  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Taylor, Monique  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Vanthof, John  
Vernile, Daiene  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 99; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 12, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

#### VISITORS

#### VISITEURS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I just want to invite all members to room 351 for a reception honouring the Mallorytown Glassworks display at Queen's Park. I have a number of constituents here. They're very proud of this display on the first floor, so I hope you'll see it. If you're available, please come to room 351 between 2 and 3 this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Adrian and Andrew Le Coyte and their father, David Le Coyte, are here today from the United Kingdom. They're here to watch the legislative proceedings, and I want to welcome them here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Monsieur le Président, it gives me great pleasure to introduce two of my distinguished constituents, Katherine and Michael Duncan.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Lorraine LeBlanc et Janet Gasparini sont venues de Sudbury pour les présentations d'Alzheimer. Je voulais leur souhaiter la bienvenue.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1202 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** This morning, I introduced Shelley Green of the Alzheimer Society of Oxford, and I forgot to introduce Heather Wilson-Boast and Jaclyn Turpin. They were also here this morning, and they're still here this afternoon. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to welcome two people from my constituency: Glenn Marais and David Robinson. They're here today to talk to us about Say My Name Canada. Welcome.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** They're not in the House right now, but they were here earlier for a tour of Queen's Park: Georgian Bay school, a school from the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. We welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I'd like to welcome to the chamber today Beth Robinson of my community, from Kingston and the Islands.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The member for Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You're probably getting sick of this over these last five weeks, but today I have my wife, Jane, up there in the audience, and my granddaughter Rachel, who was a page here three years ago. They're here to see Madison once again. You can kind of tell; I know the looks don't come from me, but now you know where they come from.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You just bought yourself some real brownie points for that one.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I just want to introduce my EA, Theresa Lubowitz, and Domenic Bitondo, who is interning in my office this summer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds-Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thanks, Speaker. I just want to thank you for greeting a delegation from the Thousand Islands who are here today. They're coming into the chamber right now. They're from many municipalities, but I want to especially mention two local mayors who are here: Erika Demchuk from the town of Gananoque, and Roger Haley from the township of Front of Yonge.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I also want to thank members from my riding who came down by bus today for the Enough is Enough hydro protest today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

**Mr. Bill Walker:** In celebration of Naturopathic Medicine Week, I'm pleased to rise today in the House in recognition of naturopathic doctors in my riding of

Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and across the province. Naturopathic doctors are at the forefront of health and preventive medicine in communities throughout Ontario. They're opening their doors and conducting free healthy living seminars and providing information and education on the benefits of naturopathic medicine.

While this week would normally be cause for celebration for these health professionals, the government's proposed regulations, which will prevent NDs from accessing necessary and essential laboratory tests and result in the shuffling of patients between NDs' offices, are dampening the celebration.

NDs and their patients in my community are concerned about their ability to provide continuity of care to their patients and the limitations placed on them to provide the exemplary, safe and effective care NDs have demonstrated over the last 90 years.

As Ontarians are aging and chronic diseases are becoming more prevalent, we should be striving to make NDs an equal partner in our health care system, helping them to integrate prevention and to provide diagnosis and treatment to patients. Every day, thousands of Ontarians depend on the services of naturopathic doctors, which are a blend of conventional, traditional and natural medicine, to deliver an annualized and collaborative approach to health care.

The Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors represents the vast majority of licensed naturopathic doctors in Ontario. To connect with an ND near your community, please visit [www.oand.org](http://www.oand.org).

On behalf of my constituents, I thank these dedicated doctors for all they do to support the health needs of all Ontarians and would encourage the government to do the same.

### VETERANS' PLACE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, last Friday I was honoured to attend the opening ceremony for Veterans' Place at Gore Park in Hamilton. It was fitting that the ceremony was held on the 70th anniversary of Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender, VE day, the end of World War II in Europe.

Veterans' Place grew from the desire to recognize Gore Park as a place where military service has been continually commemorated for over 90 years. The cenotaph in Gore Park has been standing since 1923.

The new memorial wall is a wonderful series of illuminated glass panels that displays images and text that illustrates the meaning of military service to our community and country in the past, today and in the future.

There are black-and-white panels of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and a 1916 military parade in Gore Park.

It provides context about the conflicts and peacekeeping missions that Canada has been involved in since the cenotaph went up. The concept, design and photographs were developed by the Veterans' Place focus group made



up of local veterans, current servicemen and service-women and historians working with city hall staff.

I share their hope that Veterans' Place in Gore Park will provide the citizens of Hamilton with a space in which to reflect on and remember the past and to hope for the future.

This display has a personal meaning for me. Five members of my family were veterans of World War II—we were lucky they all returned to live out their lives—two of them in the air force and three in the navy.

## NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It gives me pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge today to recognize Naturopathic Medicine Week, which is this week, May 11 to 17. Across Canada this week, we give acknowledgement and thanks to all the naturopathic doctors who provide us with alternative paths to health.

Naturopathic doctors contribute to well-being across the country by helping patients to invest in preventive measures to ensure general good health. For those of us who do not take the time to care for ourselves on a daily basis, naturopathic doctors can help us learn how to stay healthy and live better lives.

The Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors is focusing this week on educating the public about chronic pain, fatigue and stress. In fact, they held an event last night here in Toronto stressing the importance of managing stress to improve health. That's a lesson I think many of us around Queen's Park would do well to heed.

Recently, I had the opportunity to tour the Farquharson naturopathic clinic in Ayr and to learn about what naturopathic doctors are doing to contribute to good health. As a member of the community of health care providers in Ontario, I was really glad to hear about health promotion through another lens.

I'm happy to acknowledge the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors for promoting health across the province. Speaker, it's a message that I think we would do well to follow.

## LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. The best way to protect against Lyme disease is to prevent tick bites. As we approach a long weekend, it's important to be aware of the threat that tick bites pose.

We know that ticks breed heavily in moist areas where there is long grass, most notably in our parks where people go to enjoy nature with their families. Many are walking unknowingly into a potential health hazard. They enjoy the outdoors and especially in our provincial parks. In the riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, we have Rondeau and Wheatley Provincial Parks, as well as Point Pelee National Park.

Spraying ticks is not possible, as it will harm ecosystems, but cutting back tall grasses next to walk and

bike trails inside our parks will, in fact, help alleviate this problem.

The government and legislators must do more to protect Ontarians from Lyme disease.

Individually, people can, in fact, help minimize the risk of tick bites by knowing the areas of the province where ticks are common. You can cover skin and pull socks over pant legs to minimize exposure to ticks and wear light-coloured clothing so it's easier to spot them. It's important to shower or bathe within two hours of being outdoors to wash away loose ticks. Finally, do a full-body check for ticks on yourself, children and pets.

Speaker, together, we—you and I—can keep Ontarians healthy and safe.

## RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Today, we have the very special privilege—a group stopped by Queen's Park. I told them:

*Remarks in Ojibway.*

A group of First Nations people from Treaty 9 Mushkegowuk area are walking from Cochrane to Ottawa to bring awareness to the damage Indian residential schools did to their culture, their families, to individuals and their way of life.

I had the privilege of hosting them in my office. If you might have sensed the distinct scent on the east doors, we had a smudging in my office. Together, we offered a prayer to *[remarks in Ojibway]*.

This group's main objective was to educate Canadians of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Treaty 9 group is dedicating the five-day walk to the missing and dead aboriginal women and will be thinking of them and directing their energy to this issue as they make their way to Ottawa.

1510

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission mandates include finding out the truth about what happened at these schools and then informing Canada.

The commission hopes to guide and encourage First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Canadians in a process of healing. This is to lead to reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

*Remarks in Ojibway.*

This means we are all helpers walking for Indian residential school survivors for truth and reconciliation.

*Remarks in Ojibway.*

I wish good luck to my friends on your journey.

*Remarks in Ojibway.*

See you later, my new friends.

## APOLOGY

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I want to formally offer my most sincere apologies for any offence and hurt caused by the language I used in my petition presented last week, Speaker. It was not my intention to use language that would be offensive to anyone. My choice of language did

not reflect the inclusive society that we are all hoping to build.

Additionally, I want to recognize that BlackBerry has been a key player in developing the Waterloo region into a globally renowned information and technology leader. Our government is proud to work with companies like BlackBerry to spur innovation, attract investment and create jobs.

Again, I want to reiterate my apologies to the House and to anyone who took offence to the contents of my petition.

### MALLORYTOWN GLASS WORKS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I rise on what I'm affectionately calling Mallorytown Day at Queen's Park. I'm thrilled to welcome visitors from my riding to see the Mallorytown Glass Works display on the first floor of the west wing. It's been great over the past several weeks to have this piece of Leeds–Grenville, and some truly significant Canadian history, here to make it feel like home.

Mallorytown Glass Works was Canada's first glass-works and began in 1839 when Amasa Mallory opened the factory in a log structure just outside of Mallorytown. Glassblowers produced a variety of glassware for settlers, including plates, bowls, jars and bottles. In addition to these household items, artisans also produced some stunning pieces of glass artwork. Seven of those artifacts are included in the Queen's Park display.

The factory closed in 1840 and, sadly, almost nothing remains of the building today. However, the site and the national significance of its story has been preserved, thanks to the tireless work of the Thousand Islands River Heritage Society, many of whom are with us today.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thank you.

Society members prepared the beautiful information cards that I shared on all MPPs' desks this morning.

I want to thank everyone involved for their efforts to keep this invaluable chapter of our local and national history alive.

And if you're travelling on Highway 401 through eastern Ontario this summer, Speaker, or any of the members, I'm personally inviting you to take the Mallorytown exit. Come and explore this piece of our past and discover all the beauty that Front of Yonge township and the Thousand Islands have to offer.

### ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** Aujourd'hui, je tiens à honorer une école à Ottawa qui a tout récemment remporté la première place en termes d'écoles secondaires en Ontario. C'est la première fois que l'école secondaire catholique de formation professionnelle et technique Minto fait partie des 749 écoles évaluées par l'Institut Fraser et, avec un score parfait de 10 sur 10, elle se classe au premier rang provincial. C'est tout un honneur pour cette école, située sur le campus de La Cité,

et c'est aussi un beau clin d'oeil pour la communauté francophone.

Depuis que nous avons eu le contrôle de nos propres conseils scolaires en 1992, nos élèves francophones et nos écoles francophones n'ont cessé de progresser pour aujourd'hui faire preuve d'excellence. C'est un long chemin parcouru depuis le règlement 17 de 1912, qui interdisait l'enseignement en français en Ontario. En effet, année après année, nos élèves francophones surpassent les moyennes provinciales dans plusieurs matières.

Notre gouvernement croit en la francophonie et démontre cet engagement grâce à des investissements sérieux et soutenus. Cet investissement dans l'éducation en français, nous l'avons augmenté de 101 % depuis 2003.

C'est donc avec fierté que je reconnais aujourd'hui l'école secondaire catholique de formation professionnelle et technique Minto pour son excellence, et aussi les autres écoles francophones à travers la province pour le beau travail effectué et aussi pour être un si grand allié dans la transmission de notre culture franco-ontarienne à la prochaine génération.

### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm honoured to stand in the House today to bring awareness to an organization from my wonderful riding of Newmarket–Aurora. This past January, Say My Name Canada began the "March to a Million – Coast to Coast Kindness Campaign," challenging organizations, schools, families and individuals across Canada to make one million acts of kindness. Once this goal is achieved, with participation from every province, they'll send a certificate of achievement to the United Nations and challenge the world to do another million acts of kindness.

The focus of this campaign is to counter the growing problem of bullying in our schools and community by creating a wave of kindness across Canada, with the ultimate goal of ending bullying.

This campaign has sparked an influx of random acts of kindness across York region. Whether it be a student standing up for a classmate or students volunteering in a seniors' home, the positive influence of this campaign is overwhelming.

I want to welcome David Robinson and Glenn Marais to the chamber today and thank them for initiating the campaign, which brings awareness to a very serious issue.

I also want to thank the schools, organizations, families and individuals from York region who have contributed to achieving 103,778 acts of kindness thus far.

Mr. Speaker, I know our government is doing great work on preventing bullying and harassment across the province, but there's always more we can do. Today, I challenge my colleagues to start a "March to a Million Kindness Campaign" in their communities so we can stop bullying, one random act of kindness at a time.



## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order from the member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I just want to make sure I correct my record. I didn't introduce the people who are here for the protest by name, but I do have their names. I'd like to welcome Jenni Gates from Lansdowne; Jeannette Kosnaski from Barry's Bay; Jacques Ouellette from Marathon; Ginette Chaumont from Vankleek Hill; Vanessa McClement from Barry's Bay; and Shawn Morrison from Smiths Falls. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not quite a correction of record, but tolerable.

I thank all members for their statements.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

## ONTARIO FLAG DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR  
DU DRAPEAU DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Baker moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 101, An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day / Projet de loi 101, Loi proclamant le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** First raised on May 21, 1965, the Ontario flag symbolizes the contributions of Ontarians from across our province, our rich history, diverse heritage, distinct values and shared successes.

This legislation, if passed, would allow us to officially recognize the 50th anniversary of the raising of our flag this year, on May 21, 2015, and would proclaim that May 21 in each year be recognized as Ontario Flag Day.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

## NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

SEMAINE NATIONALE  
DES SOINS INFIRMIERS

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It's with great pleasure that I rise during National Nursing Week to acknowledge the immense contribution that nurses make to the health of the people of Ontario, and to thank them for this contribution.

I want to begin by thanking the nurses in this Legislature: the member for Cambridge, the member for Scarborough–Agincourt, the member for Haliburton–

Kawartha Lakes–Brock, the member for Welland—those are the nurses that I know—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I like nurses.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I like nurses.

**Interjection:** Madeleine Meilleur.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** And Madeleine Meilleur, the member from Ottawa–Vanier; that's right. I want to thank all of them, but I want to thank all of their colleagues around the province.

1520

And to the doctors in the Legislature, I want to say that I know that they know the importance of nurses.

The commitment of nurses to patient care is commendable and it's inspiring. Le dévouement des infirmières et infirmiers envers les soins aux patients est louable et une source d'inspiration.

As our government works to transform our health care system into one that is patient-centred and sustainable, nurses play a valuable role in helping us to provide that coordinated quality care.

I just realized that the member for Nickel Belt—is she not—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** She's at physio. Okay. Sorry. I do not want to miss anyone. Still great.

That valuable role nurses play in helping us to provide that coordinated quality care is so central to our health care system.

Since 2003, we've expanded the total number of nurses employed in Ontario by over 24,000. That includes 3,500 more in 2014—remarkable. We have invested to support nurses at every stage in their career, improving access to continuing education and professional development, and enhancing recruitment and retention.

Just today, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care launched our new plan for home and community care, which will improve and expand service, including 80,000 additional nursing hours to help make it possible for patients with complex care needs to receive care in their homes and in their community—wonderful.

In addition to recognizing the important role that nurses play, our new plan to improve home and community care is good for patients and their caregivers and will help us ensure that people get care when and where they need it.

I look forward to continuing to work with nurses on the critical transformation of our health care system. Je me réjouis à la perspective de continuer de travailler avec le personnel infirmier sur cette transformation essentielle de notre réseau de soins de santé.

We value them as partners in the health care delivery in this province, and we appreciate everything that they do every day for patients across the province. Thank you to the nurses across Ontario for all that they do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to recognize National Nursing Week, which runs from May 11 to 17. I thank

the Premier for the shout-out for all the nurses in the Legislature. We thank you and I think it's a wonderful addition to our Legislature.

National Nursing Week does coincide with International Nurses Day, which was on May 12. For those not in the nursing community, you will recognize May 12 as Ms. Florence Nightingale's birthday. Ms. Nightingale was widely credited as the founder of modern nursing, a profession that forms the very backbone of our health care system today, and of which I was a privileged member, of course, prior to entering political life. I always say that in my other life, I was a nurse, but you are always a nurse, as my fellow nurses say, and as the Premier has witnessed recently.

This year's theme for National Nursing Week is "Nurses: With You Every Step of the Way." I appreciate the sentiment of that theme and consider it to be particularly relevant given the nature of our health care system today. After all, for many of us, nurses represent our first point of contact with the health care system and serve vital acute-care roles in our hospitals.

More and more, patients that require some form of continuing or extended care can tell you the important roles our nurses play outside of the hospital setting.

With an aging population and growing demand for services, our health care system is expected to be put under increased pressure over the foreseeable future. For this reason, we in the PC caucus have been consistent in our calls for a health care system that is more patient-centric. Health care that is centred on the patient and can be delivered outside of the hospital is not only good for patients, it is more economical.

It is our province's nurses that have consistently demonstrated that they are a valuable and necessary resource to building such a system. There are numerous patients receiving care in their communities that rely on their nurse to not only provide quality care but also valuable guidance and advice on how to navigate what is often a very complex health care system.

Nurses have a wide range of skills and knowledge, and represent a versatile resource which we must engage further if we're to meet the health care challenges of the future.

The idea of nurses being with you every step of the way is not just an abstract ideal. It's a very practical principle that needs to guide the decisions of this government as it determines how best to structure Ontario's health care system. Nurses are a vital resource in building a system that is very cost-effective—yet still able to handle the increased demand in services that we certainly anticipate seeing.

To me, that means working with our nurses to expand the breadth of services they provide. I know that when I met with many of the CCAC nurses, they were saying, "Less bureaucracy. Let us make the decisions. We are the ones with the knowledge base." It's much more time-efficient for them to say, "Yes, this person needs this type of care in their home and now"—so empowering

those nurses to lead community-based health care initiatives.

We should be investing more in our nurses. I know that we learned in the news just last month that there would be 250 fewer nurses working. We learned just yesterday that there are not enough nurses in the northern areas of our provinces, leaving communities dangerously underserved. I know that when we travelled up there, as part of the sexual harassment and violence committee, we certainly heard that nurses could use some more tools and deliver more of the health care that is so desperately needed up there. I think we could all work together to make those changes.

This being National Nursing Week, I think it's a time for the government to expand its creativity and give nurses some more abilities to provide front-line care, both in northern Ontario, as I mentioned, but certainly in our communities. It's critical to building our modern health care system. I am hopeful, and I am sure, that the government will continue to recognize the vital role that nurses play in our health system.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's my honour to rise today, on behalf of the New Democrats, to recognize nursing week and to recognize the incredible work that Ontario's nurses do for the people of Ontario.

Nurses are the backbone of our health care system. They support patients every step of the way, as they move through our health care system. From the moment they enter care to the time they are discharged, and then onward through their recovery, not only through the hospital system but in community care, in family health teams—all across our health care system—nurses are there. They continue to be one of Ontario's most respected and trusted professions. Of course, they run clinics on their own in many communities in Ontario. Nurses really do pull the weight when it comes to the health care system in this province. It's because Ontario's nurses are professionals who perform their duties with the highest of standards and the most significant amount of excellence we could expect.

They do this challenging work because they actually care about the health of Ontarians. They care about the well-being of the people they care for. For all of this, Speaker, Ontarians are extremely grateful. In fact, you will know that nurses are on the top of the list when Ontarians consider their most cherished, treasured profession; it is nurses.

While I was visiting Health Sciences North in Sudbury for nursing week back in 2012, I was proud to be made an honorary nurse. But I have to say that I've seen the work nurses do and I don't know that I would actually be a very good nurse. Even a sore finger is something I have a hard time with.

It happened to be the same year that my niece graduated from nursing school at McMaster, and I'm proud to say that she is a very skilled and professional nurse acting in a hospital, actually, on a particularly difficult ward. She does great work for the people of Hamilton at that hospital.



But the real nurses in Sudbury are facing what they are calling a dire situation because of budget cuts by the government that they've experienced. This is the situation, unfortunately, that faces nurses across our province. We should be honouring our nurses by actually providing them with the resources they need to do their jobs. Instead, we have had the longest unbroken period of real-dollar public hospital cuts in Ontario's history. Instead, we see nurses on a picket line in Welland or being fired in places like Peterborough.

Research clearly shows that more hours of registered nurse care leads to more lives saved and fewer complications for patients. But in 2015, the Ontario Nurses' Association has seen more than 400 positions cut. This is the equivalent of close to 800,000 hours of quality RN care.

**1530**

Just today, ONA reported that more than 50 registered nurses' positions are being cut from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, CHEO, in Ottawa. ONA knows that another consecutive year of funding freezes will mean that even more registered nurses will be cut, which will, in their words, leave hospital patients in Ontario "at an increased risk of complications and even death."

According to the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario, health care is "approaching a crisis situation ... and nurses are telling us that much more needs to be done in order to provide patients with the care they truly need."

Speaker, I was in a round-table discussion prior to the picket line going up in Welland and was shocked to hear nurses describe their experience at work as being "epic" in terms of the stress level—epic stress levels. Hospital wards are overcrowded, long-term-care homes are under-resourced, and home care is underfunded.

Nurses in Ontario are suffering. They are suffering from increased workloads, stress burnout, and, according to the RPNAO, "the moral distress associated with watching in frustration as their patients fail to get the level and quality of care they deserve...."

We don't honour our nurses by making it harder for them to do their jobs. We don't honour our nurses by firing RNs and reducing hours of care. We don't honour our nurses by privatizing their positions and denying fair compensation.

We owe our nurses more than empty words. Nurses support patients, clients, residents and families in our communities each and every day. Our nurses are there for people in both the best and worst of times. In return, we have a duty to support our nurses.

New Democrats believe in a public health care system that is world-class, a system that supports the patients of Ontario and our front-line care providers. We are proud to stand with nurses as they strive to provide the best possible health care.

To the nurses across our province: Thank you. Thank you to all of you for doing all the great work you do to make sure Ontarians are healthy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On behalf of 22,255 Ontarians, I'd like to present this hydro petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Hydro One rates continue to rise causing undue hardship for Ontario residents, families and businesses;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"By far the major cost associated with our hydro bills is the delivery charge, which is exceeding the price of hydro itself. We demand the removal of all the hidden charges that make up the delivery charge to be replaced with a standard charge, the same for all customers in Ontario that reflects the actual cost of hydroelectric delivery.

"Regulatory charges are inexcusable and need to be removed.

"We demand the immediate removal of the HST on Hydro bills. Why is the Province of Ontario charging HST on what is, and always has been, a necessity?

"We demand the immediate removal of the debt retirement charge for all customers

"The time-of-use smart-metering system is also causing serious problems with everyday life. Faulty meters continue to create overbilling issues for thousands of residents. Instead of resolving these overcharges Hydro One continues to force payment through harassment and threats of disconnection.

"Therefore, we demand the removal of all smart meters to be replaced with analog meters.

"We want to be billed a fair and accurate rate for hydro for all customers and we demand action on this matter immediately!"

I have affixed my signature, and I'm going to send it to the table with page Cailyn. I want to thank these residents of Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New petition.

### LGBTQ CONVERSION THERAPY

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario needs greater protections for vulnerable LGBTQ youth;

"Whereas in 2013 the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) removed transgender and gender non-conforming identities from the mental disorders category. Since then, every major professional association in the US and Canada have condemned so-called conversion therapy, some even going as far as to call it abusive;

"Whereas LGBTQ youth face 14 times the risk of suicide compared to their heterosexual peers and 77% of trans respondents in an Ontario-based survey had seriously considered suicide with 45% having already attempted suicide. For LGBTQ youth with strong parental support, their risk for suicide dropped by 93%;

"Whereas Ontario's Ministry of Health currently funds LGBTQ conversion therapy through OHIP;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health immediately cease funding all known forms of conversion therapy, and ban the practice for youth under 18."

For all those children who are at risk of dying and for all those who have signed, I add my signature and I give it to Chloe to be delivered to the table.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have yet more petitions that have come in today. I especially would like to acknowledge Dr. Lisa Bentley, whose practice is in Mississauga, for continuing to send such petitions as this. It's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly and entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water." It reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition, and to send it down with page Samantha.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Hydro One rates continue to rise causing undue hardship for Ontario residents, families and businesses;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"By far the major cost associated with our hydro bills is the delivery charge, which is exceeding the price of hydro itself. We demand the removal of all the hidden charges that make up the delivery charge to be replaced with a standard charge, the same for all customers in Ontario that reflects the actual cost of hydroelectric delivery.

"Regulatory charges are inexcusable and need to be removed.

"We demand the immediate removal of the HST on Hydro bills. Why is the Province of Ontario charging HST on what is, and always has been, a necessity?"

"We demand the immediate removal of the debt retirement charge for all customers

"The time-of-use smart-metering system is also causing serious problems with everyday life. Faulty meters continue to create overbilling issues for thousands of residents. Instead of resolving these overcharges Hydro One continues to force payment through harassment and threats of disconnection.

"Therefore, we demand the removal of all smart meters to be replaced with analog meters.

"We want to be billed a fair and accurate rate for hydro for all customers and we demand action on this matter immediately!"

I'm signing my name and giving it to page Thomas.

### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I have a petition to save the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

"Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015



shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

1540

"Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

I couldn't agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to put my name on it and give it to page Samantha to bring to the Clerk.

#### REALTORS

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I, too, have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the Toronto Real Estate Board, and bring it on behalf of my good friend Roger Kilgour and his wife Ruth Hamilton, who recently, as realtors, helped me buy a house in Beaches-East York.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario real estate salespeople are prevented by the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 from incorporating their businesses through a personal real estate corporation; and

"Whereas other regulated professions, including chartered accountants, lawyers, health professionals, social workers, mortgage brokers, insurance agents, architects and engineers, can all form personal corporations; and

"Whereas permitting real estate salespeople to incorporate would create jobs and increase government revenue;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Tax Fairness for Realtors Act, 2015 and give real estate professionals in Ontario the ability to form personal real estate corporations."

I sign my name and leave this with Ethan.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I also have a petition, put together by students at Waterloo-Oxford school in my riding. I'd like to thank Michael Whitehead for taking the initiative to do so. Also, the co-president of Waterloo-Oxford students' council, Nikolas Kuttis, affixed his name to this.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the secondary students of Durham and Sudbury are not in school because their teachers are on strike; and

"Whereas negotiations with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation are still ongoing; and

"Whereas students of the Waterloo Region District School Board would find it difficult to return to class and work effectively if there is an extended strike potentially impacting summer employment and other plans; and

"Whereas Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School is not semester-based, but one full-year term, students are concerned they could lose all of their credits from this school year; and

"Whereas grade 12 students in particular are most concerned that with the loss of all of their credits this year, a strike could impact their ability to move on to post-secondary school; and

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To continue and complete, at the earliest possible time, negotiations with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation so secondary students across the board do not have to worry about their academic futures being compromised by a strike."

Speaker, I also will sign this petition, thank those who submitted it to me and send it down to the table with Megan.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I figure, with Nursing Week and all, that I would read this petition into the record.

"Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of beds on the surgical unit, cuts to vital patient support services including hospital cleaning, and more than 87,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year to be cut from departments across the hospital, including in-patient psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical units, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care and the emergency department; and

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"(1) Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect the beds and services;" as well as

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Joshua to bring it to the Clerk.

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Mr. Speaker, I may be the only one on our side today; I don't know.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which will make the member opposite quite happy.

"Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

"Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto ... and those numbers continue to grow; and

"Whereas there is no French secondary school ... in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and ...

"Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and ...

"Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; ...

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school ... in the community ... so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live."

I agree with this petition, I sign my name and leave it with page Ryan.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition here for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

"Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

I support this petition, affix my name and send it down with Carina.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** In honour of nursing week, it's with great concern that I read this one.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Sault Area Hospital is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of acute care beds and cuts to more than 59,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year from departments across the hospital, including the operating room, the intensive care unit, oncology, surgical, hemodialysis, infection control as well as patient care coordinators, personal support workers and others;

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the proposed cuts to the Sault Area Hospital and protect the beds and services;

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Colton to bring it to the Clerks' table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The time for petitions is over.

#### OPPOSITION DAY

##### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

##### PRIVATISATION DES BIENS PUBLICS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario must abandon its plan to privatize Hydro One and maintain public ownership in this strategic asset to avoid losing annual hydro revenues used to fund education, health care and other vital services; to avoid hydro rate increases related to privatization; and to retain public control over Ontario's energy future.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 4. Ms. Horwath.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm very pleased to rise on behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus to speak on this motion on the floor today.

First, I'd like to recognize that there are many people who were out on the lawns today. We have some visitors in the gallery who are here to tell this Legislature, to tell the Liberal government, that they are fed up with soaring



electricity rates in this province. They are tired of having to worry about keeping their lights on.

1550

Many of these folks who were on the lawns today travelled long distances to be here. It's important that we recognize that and that we thank them for adding their voices to the tens of thousands who are trying to send this government a message.

I know there are some still here. I recognize that up in the gallery we have a number of people from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, particularly the Ontario president, Fred Hahn, who has been with us on this fight from day one. Welcome, and thank you all for being here.

The motion that we have put before this House is a pretty simple motion, really. But it is also a very, very critical one. It's very important for the long-term economic health of our province and it's important to the people of this province. The motion reflects a message that I have frankly been hearing loudly and clearly from all corners of our province, from seniors, from businesses, from industry, from agriculture, from moms, from dads, from youth, from people of every walk of life and every part of this province: This Premier and her Liberal government must abandon their plan to privatize Hydro One.

Hydro One is a public asset and it belongs in public hands. The decision to sell Ontario's electricity system is a short-sighted decision. It has no public support and it is the wrong thing to do for this province. You know, Ontarians don't want to pay the price for yet another bad decision by this Liberal government. They want the Premier to stop her privatization scheme before it's too late.

People in Nova Scotia know the impacts of privatizing an electricity system. They know what privatized power means. Their bills, in fact, rival Ontario's bills for being the highest bills in the country.

Meanwhile, people in provinces like Manitoba and Quebec with their public systems are actually paying half the price or less than what we are paying here in Ontario. Between taxes, hydro dividends and investment, Quebec and Manitoba receive a substantial yearly return from their public hydro systems, as does Ontario. Ontario reaps benefits from having a public hydro system.

In fact, a report that was just recently released—it was commissioned by CUPE—was the Peters report. It shows that selling a 60% stake will cause a net annual loss of \$338.8 million. An annual loss of almost half a billion dollars, really, is what it comes down to. And for what? A misguided, one-time cash grab for Kathleen Wynne.

Tens of thousands of people across this province are calling on the Premier to address the unaffordable cost of hydro. Instead, what is her government doing? Instead, her government is embarking on a reckless scheme to privatize this system.

To make it worse, they are plowing ahead. They are ramming this through the Legislature. They're shutting down debate. They're avoiding consultation. They're ignoring the people of Ontario who actually own Hydro One. And all the while, they're spinning false rhetoric.

The Premier talks about leveraging our assets. What utter nonsense. Leveraging a public asset doesn't mean selling it off to the private sector so that we can no longer control it. It means being able to use our hydro system in the public's interest. Leveraging an asset was using Ontario Hydro, for example, to save the town of Kapuskasing from the closure of their largest mill. Leveraging an asset is how we are going to electrify First Nations communities that are currently on diesel generation, even though it's very, very costly to do so. You don't leverage an asset by selling it off for a pittance.

Hydro One's annual report says clearly that its business interests, as an organization, are often in conflict with the public interest. Well, which interest do you think is going to prevail when Hydro One becomes a private corporation? It's not going to be the public interest that's going to prevail. It's going to be the private interest that's going to prevail.

The only way we maintain an electricity system that actually serves the public interest, that serves Ontarians' interest, is by keeping Hydro One public.

While wages are stagnating for most people in this province, and seniors and people on fixed incomes have seen their take-home pay decline, what's happening with hydro? Rates are going up. In fact, rates have tripled. Why is that the case? Because people are paying the price for Liberal mistakes in the hydro system.

Two weeks ago, I was at a beautiful co-op in the city of Kingston. People there told me that their neighbours in this co-op could only afford to heat one room of their home this past winter. With this particular family in this co-op, every other room was cold, and they lived in one room of their house for the entire winter because that's all they could afford to heat. These folks literally camped out in one room. There's something terribly wrong here.

These are everyday families, middle-class Ontarians, who cannot afford to heat their homes.

This weekend, we held a town hall in Brantford. At that event, there was a bakery owner, a woman named Laura, who owns her own business. She was telling us that she has to struggle already to be able to afford to pay the bills. Let's face it, hydro is necessary for a bakery. There are hot ovens going day in and day out in a bakery. As well, air conditioning has to be utilized in the summer to try to give her staff some semblance of an ability to survive through a hot summer in a bakery. She told us clearly at that meeting that if the hydro rates continue to go out of control the way the Liberals have been allowing so far, and the way they're going to increase significantly with the privatization, she's going to have to start laying off staff. She's not going to be able to keep people working at her bakery because she can't pay the utility costs.

There was a woman named Kim at that town hall meeting. Kim was literally in tears—not tears of self-pity. She and her husband are having a very difficult time. He's severely disabled. He's on ODSP. He's having a tough time. They are living on a very low income. She was in tears—not out of pity, though; out of anger and

frustration against a government that refuses to listen to the struggles that the people of Ontario are facing. Kim knows that if the government goes ahead with their wrong-headed plan, she and her husband will likely be living on the streets in the future.

Speaker, unfortunately, no matter how many of these stories I hear, the Premier refuses to listen. She refuses to listen to any of them. Instead, she's restricting the number of hearings that the Liberals are allowing for this misguided budget.

People outside of Toronto won't get to provide any input into the privatization of hydro and how it's going to hurt them. In fact, the sign-up list for the people to be able to participate in those public hearings just opened a couple of hours ago. Two or three hours ago, the list was opened. Already, 286 people have signed up to tell the Liberals what they think, and that's just here in Toronto over the last couple of hours. They have until 4:30 tomorrow afternoon to sign up for the hearings. That's how open and transparent the government of Ontario under Kathleen Wynne's Liberals is here in Ontario.

They are so dead set on ramming through this legislation that they wouldn't even let MPPs debate this process here in the Legislature yesterday. The Liberals rang bells on the opposition, to shut down opposition voices in the process of ramming this bill through. Do you know what? The Liberal government would rather play cynical political games than actually hear the concerns of the people of this province. This government will do anything to avoid any real public accountability and real public scrutiny of this privatization scheme. This arrogant government is showing a complete and utter lack of respect not just for the parliamentary process and the MPPs who sit in this chamber, but for all Ontarians. Once again, it proves just how out of touch the Liberals are with the people of this province.

This Premier doesn't want to hear what Ontarians have to say, but New Democrats do. New Democrats want to hear what the people of Ontario have to say, so let's hear from some of the people. Here's just a sample of some of the messages that I have received. Michael from Toronto says, "I'm writing to express my strong disapproval for (the government's) plan to sell Hydro One."

**1600**

Lily, a mother of two, wrote, "I am against selling off something that is a necessity for generations to come."

Randy from Matheson says, "I must voice my utter and complete objection to any potential sell-off of Hydro One."

Victor from Hamilton rightly points out that "these sell-offs ... leave Ontarians poorer in the short and long run!"

Julia from Nestleton Station says, "I am appalled that Premier Wynne threatens to sell Hydro One."

Jan worries that privatization "will kill ... small businesses like mine."

Jim from Milton says, "It is a sad day for Ontario, and we will be paying the price."

Lloyd from Hamilton says, "Please don't off-load this essential service."

Dale from Brampton points out that "we all know that it will end in disaster."

Leanne from Belle River thinks that this is "the biggest short-sighted decision I've ever heard."

Ishwar from Toronto believes, as we do, that "hydro should be owned and operated by the 'people' of Ontario."

And on and on and on.

People are worried, they are scared and they are angry. But not just families; I've heard from representatives from the auto sector, who have talked about how concerned manufacturers are about this scheme. Rate increases will even further reduce our competitiveness as a province. And we know that we have big problems there already because of the way the Liberals have managed Ontario.

If the government moves ahead with this wrongheaded decision, there will be dire consequences on every front, particularly, though, in rural and northern Ontario. We know that those kinds of communities, particularly in the north, have very long, very cold winters. We know that some of them are still in an untenable situation where they are heating with electricity. Those folks are paying \$20,000 a year on their household electricity bills. They're not going to be able to afford the 70% increase or so that's going to be likely with this wrongheaded move that the Liberals are bringing in.

The government-side MPPs need to actually ask themselves what they're going to say to their constituents when their constituents ask them, "Why was there no consultation on this? Why didn't you tell us when you ran for election that you were actually running on a plan to privatize Hydro One? Why were the New Democrats talking about all the problems in the budget and the platform but Liberals denied it all?" And yet it was all there; they didn't talk about it once when it came to the actual privatization of hydro. They talked about silly things like opening up ownership, maximizing the assets and leveraging this—that kind of double-talk, if you want to call it that, doublespeak. But not once were they open and transparent and up front and straightforward with the people in their ridings, in those Liberal ridings.

Those Liberal members—not a single one of them was true to the people who actually voted for them on the ballot, because they did not tell them during the election campaign that they were actually going to privatize their Hydro One system. And now they're saying, "It's too late. You bought a bill of goods. You voted for us, but ha ha, you got fooled. Now we're going to privatize hydro, and we don't even care what you have to say about it. We're shutting down the consultation. We're making sure you never have a say. You didn't have a say during the election because we didn't tell you, and you don't have a say now because we're shutting down the hearings." So let's hope those MPPs are proud of the work they've done.

Let me tell you, Speaker, Ontario—



**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Pursuant to standing order 23(h), that particular part of the member's dialogue does represent the imputing of motive.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** In my humble opinion, it's certainly borderline. I don't think she's gone over the line yet, but she will take care where she's going.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians will remember. This Liberal government needs to listen to the people of Ontario. This Premier needs to listen to the people of Ontario. The members opposite need to listen to the people of Ontario—listen to their own constituents, for goodness' sakes. Stand up for the people of Ontario. Make sure that you represent them. They oppose the sale of Hydro One. That's what I'm hearing everywhere I go, and I'm sure they're hearing it, too. So do what you were elected to do: Represent the people in your ridings and stop the sale of Hydro One. It is the wrong thing to do. Everyone in this House—everyone in this House—should support affordable public power in Ontario and pass this motion today.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. You may sit down now, thank you.

Further debate?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join this debate. Thanks to the leader of the third party for the motion that she's placed on the floor today. I think it's probably brought forward in a constructive way, and it certainly expresses very strongly, the opinions of that party as to what the future of Hydro One should be.

Certainly I think, when we look at the history of Ontario, the provision of power to the industry in this province and to the people in this province, we live in a climate, we live in a country, we live in a province where the reliance on a reliable system of electricity generation and distribution is something that is very, very important to the people in the province of Ontario. It's something that I think governments in the past have treated sometimes with the seriousness it deserves and sometimes in, my opinion, simply haven't placed the highest priority on it or sometimes haven't given it the attention that it deserves.

In this case, Speaker, a proposal is being brought forward into this House that there should be a change, in the government's opinion, to how Hydro One is constructed and to the way it does business.

In the past—the speaker is absolutely right—it served the people of Ontario; I think sometimes it served the people of Ontario very, very well. Hydro One, in some respects, has a very good reputation. In other respects, I think, to my constituents and to others around this province and in recent years, perhaps, the reputation hasn't been what it should be.

What we did in the last election, Speaker, is, we went out and we each presented our platforms to the people of

Ontario. And I think two of us at least—ourselves and the third party—suggested that we would take a look at things and we'd take a look at them with a different view. Basically, that we'd examine what we had in the form of public assets, and see if those assets could be used in other ways. The idea behind that is that you go out, you examine the issue and then you proceed on the best advice you have.

I think the speaker herself was very, very sincere when she said, "There's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns." I think that's perfectly responsible, Speaker. She goes on to say, "I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that." I think for a political leader in the province of Ontario to say that at that juncture is the right thing to say, Speaker.

What we did is, we went out, we sought advice from people in the business community. We sought advice from the people who work at Hydro One themselves, the Power Workers' Union, and, of course, others around the province offered opinions on this. At the end of the day, the advice that came forward was that we should allow the privatization or the selling off or the IPO—or whatever you want to call it—of about 60% of the company. The feeling was that you still wanted to have control over the organization, but you wanted to attract that private sector discipline and you wanted to build a hybrid model of Hydro One. I don't think there's anything wrong with that.

During periods of my own life, I worked for Mississauga Hydro for a number of years. My father, for example, as a skilled tradesman, helped build some of the Ontario Hydro nuclear plants. So I've had a personal interest and a professional interest in how the hydro system is run in the province of Ontario.

I think what's being brought forward today is an opinion as to—I don't know what. I really don't know what it says, other than, "Don't do what the government's proposing it should do."

I'm suggesting that the advice that the government has received is actually sound advice. It's advice that the people who work right in that company, the Power Workers' Union, also support as well. I think other governments over the years have attempted to engage themselves in the Hydro One issue, and the idea was to build a combination of public sector ownership and private sector discipline into the organization, so that when it did the distribution for people in the province of Ontario, it was doing it in an efficient way but it was also doing it in the best interest of taxpayers, ratepayers and citizens in the province of Ontario.

Some of the safeguards that are being suggested that we should put in place are that 40% of the board of directors will be nominated by Ontario and that a two-thirds board vote will be required for any major decisions that are brought forward to the Hydro One board. We will have the power—the government, this House, this Legislature—to dismiss the board if we so see fit. We will introduce some legislation along with this proposal

that would mean that the government cannot own less than 40% of Hydro One shares.

1610

I appreciate the opinion of the leader of the third party. I think she put it forward very forcefully and has expressed an opinion. I think, on an issue as major as this, there's going to be a variety of opinions. The one that we've put forward, I think, is the one that will, in the fullness of time and perhaps even today—I haven't seen any polling on it, but there's a variety of polling on it. I think in the fullness of time, people will look back to the decision that was made by this House, by this government, on this proposal and will realize that this was the right way to proceed.

So my thanks to the member for bringing this forward. I happen to respectfully disagree with her opinion. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** It's my pleasure to join this debate on behalf of the PC caucus, as their energy critic. You know, there's a little bit of merit in the motion. We won't be supporting it.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Oh, the wheat from the chaff.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Yes, definitely. Definitely.

Let's talk about the folks that were here earlier today, the people who are saddened and frustrated about their hydro bills. They didn't come here to talk about Hydro One. You know why they were here? Because for years now, they've watched their hydro bills go up and up and up, and they want a government that responds to the pain that they're feeling.

The sad part of it is that this government, the Wynne government, has failed to respond. In fact, they refuse to respond to the pain that people are suffering. But they didn't come here because they are concerned about the ownership of Hydro One; they came here because of the price of hydro, the bottom line on their bill, which is constructed by the electricity, the distribution and all of the other add-ons that this government is famous for.

We've taken a position on Hydro One. Our position has been clear that we believe the province should retain majority ownership of Hydro One. The government has decided they're going to sell 60% of Hydro One. It is our position that with majority ownership, we will always maintain the necessary control to protect the people of Ontario.

We have also said that any sale of any shares of Hydro One should be subject to a value-for-money audit by both the accountability officer and the provincial Auditor General. Those are the kinds of protections we want to see in place so that the people of Ontario, if there is a share purchase, a share sale of the assets of any of the entities of the OEFC, will be getting fair value.

We have also made it clear that any of the monies accrued from the sale of any of the shares of Hydro One or any of the electricity entities must go to pay off the electricity debt—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** That won't bring down rates.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** It must go to pay off the electricity debt. It is the debt that is crippling electricity rates.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I don't need a lesson from the member from Kitchener—Waterloo about how to run the electricity system. I know my job; I can certainly tell you that.

So let's talk about the NDP now—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Let's talk about the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I don't need any help with my job, who I will say is out of order or who isn't. It's not up to you to chastise the member from Kitchener—Waterloo. I'll handle that. Thanks very much.

Continue.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I listened to the NDP out on the lawn today chastising the PCs, and you know why? It just boggles my mind that they can sit there and be so smug when they stood hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder with the Liberals in 2009 with the passage of the Green Energy Act.

The Green Energy Act is the primary piece of legislation that is responsible for the skyrocketing electricity rates we see in Ontario today. It is responsible for the \$50 billion that is going to be paid out in global adjustment by the end of this year. It is responsible for the lucrative contracts to Liberal friends to build wind turbines all across this beautiful province—a blight on the land—ones that are inefficient, intermittent and produce power at excessive rates. We pay excessive rates for them to produce the power.

They have not done any of the things with regard to solving the electricity challenges. So within that Green Energy Act is the single greatest ingredient when it comes to escalating hydro rates in the province of Ontario.

The Liberals and the NDP were like a band of brothers. They couldn't vote quickly enough for the Green Energy Act. Over here, my friends in the NDP—yes, they chastise me, and sometimes I may even deserve a little bit. But when it comes to the Green Energy Act, they cannot run and they cannot hide from what they did to the people of Ontario when they supported the Green Energy Act. That is the worst piece of legislation in the history of this province.

George Smitherman got his way. He brought in the Green Energy Act and then he decided, "I'm getting the heck out of here. I'm going to be mayor of Toronto." That didn't work out very well, either, because they figured it out: If he can mess it up so badly in the Legislature, he's probably going to screw it up in Toronto, too.

Let's at least be straight about what we're talking about here today. This is ideology speaking. This has nothing to do with hydro rates; it's ideology. It has nothing to do with the price people pay for hydro.

The NDP is married to the belief that everything has to be publicly owned. How did that work out in Russia? I'm just curious. Let me know when you figure that out.



### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down.

Here's the deal: The third party is yelling at the member from Renfrew; the member from Renfrew is yelling at them. But nobody is going through the poor Speaker.

From now on, you'll direct your comments through me instead of pointing and yelling at the third party. Thank you so much.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Anyway, Speaker, as I said from the start—I'm looking right at you, Speaker—our party will not be supporting this motion, because it is based purely on ideology. We have made it clear from the start: We want to make sure that any asset that is sold in this province gets a fair value to the people of this province. They own the assets.

It is incumbent upon the government to ensure that any deal that is made is good for the people of Ontario. It is incumbent upon the province to ensure that any of the proceeds from this deal go to pay down the electricity debt. When those things are in place—and we return majority share, so that the biggest shareholder continues to be the people.

If all of those things are in place, I am confident that—if this government changes its tune on the Green Energy Act and the disaster that they're perpetrating on the people of Ontario, with some help, then we'll be okay. Until that day happens, no matter who owns Hydro One, we're in for a lot of trouble.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kitchener-Waterloo now has the floor.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** For the love of humanity, Mr. Speaker. It's not ideology when you follow the money, and that's what I'm going to be focused on here today.

Although this government has not been listening to the people—they have not been listening to their constituents; they haven't been listening to experts. There is someone I just want to quote. His name is Bryne Purchase. He's a former chief economist of Ontario, a former Deputy Minister of Finance, a former Deputy Minister of Revenue and a former Deputy Minister of Energy, Science and Technology. This is a qualified insider who understands how government is supposed to work, and he has been very critical of this decision.

He goes on to say—and this was just published yesterday: "How can a major public policy initiative, not even discussed in a general election, opposed by a solid majority of the Ontario public, and that has no strong rationale in basic economics wind up as a virtual fait accompli?"

"Impossible in a democracy you say. Yet, that is what has happened with the Wynne government's decision to privatize Hydro One Networks. I would bet even some members of the Liberal caucus and a lot of Liberal voters are shocked by this decision.

"Hydro One Networks is a \$15-billion asset and this privatization is basically a one-time decision. As the NDP leader—the leader of the third party—"says, there is no 'do-over' here. Surely, a decision of this magnitude deserves some special democratic process around it."

1620

"Yet Kathleen Wynne can jam this through!"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You can't use "Kathleen Wynne," "Premier" or "Premier Wynne"—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The Premier can—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Let me finish. "Premier Wynne" will be acceptable.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Premier Wynne "can jam this through, solely because she is the Premier and has a majority government. That's all that matters. By the time" the Premier "can be replaced at the next provincial election, the privatization will be virtually impossible to undo.

"Why do we find ourselves in this situation?" Mr. Purchase goes on to say, "If most people don't want this to happen, then why is it happening?"

Premier Wynne's "government's motivation is simple. It wants the money that Hydro One would have yielded in the next 20 years paid into the treasury in the next three years so that the government can be more assured of meeting its balanced budget target.... This isn't about Ontario's future infrastructure; it's about this Liberal government's current needs."

Bay Street wins in this deal. The Liberals established this "advisory council chaired by former Bay Street" CEO "Ed Clark, to give 'independent' advice on asset value maximization."

Let's also remember that Mr. Clark said this was going to be pro bono, and yet he charged the people of this province \$7 million for that work to consulting companies.

Finally, he goes on to say, "The privatization of Hydro One is not about economic efficiency. The Wynne government simply wants the cash infusion now, for its own short-term budgetary agenda, and at the expense of future governments. In this sense, it does show contempt for other legislators....

"Surely in a democracy, we should have the right to an open and honest debate about the disposition of major public assets, followed by a provincial referendum. Anything else shows contempt for the people" of this province.

I'd also like to remind the people who are paying attention to this—this really has caught the people of this province off guard—that this will be the largest transfer of wealth from the people of Ontario, the people of this province, who are currently owners of Hydro One. That transfer of wealth will go to Bay Street, who will become the landlords. And let's be clear: There is no rent control in this relationship.

Mr. Purchase also raises the question around the selling off of Hydro One Brampton to some nearby utilities as "dubious at best. It's just a backroom agreement with no competition or transparency"—this coming from this facade of openness and transparency from the Liberal government.

In any case, this government seems dead set on ramming this through without any sound rationale and no economic plan for actually following through on some of their promises. We saw in the budget bill that they have

not protected the people of this province from collusion; they have not done their due diligence around the finances of this deal. They've talked about broadening ownership and unlocking value. They've said everything except "sell-off," which is what they are doing.

We would love the Financial Accountability Officer to have a look at this deal, but the budget bill removes that oversight. In addition, Ombudsman oversight is removed; Auditor General oversight is removed. There will be no oversight. There will be no accountability in this deal, going forward.

We just heard yesterday—this is incredible—that the Auditor General did a review, a special report on the changes to the Government Advertising Act. She says that the changes in the guidelines about what is partisan and what is not—this government is changing that, very much in keeping with the Stephen Harper theme of this country. She said yesterday that those amendments to the Government Advertising Act make a mockery of her office. So this government is going to be able to put out any Liberal spin they want, and the people of this province are going to have to pay for it. That is just adding insult to injury.

There is very clearly a motive here, which is not in the best interests of the people of this province. I desperately hope, and we are doing our best, as the third party, to make sure that people understand that this is a huge, untenable breach of trust on the part of this government, and we will not let you forget it, going forward.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. I hope your hand is all right.

The member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, 30 years ago, when I moved back to Ontario after spending six years in Western Canada, it used to take me 30 to 45 minutes to get from my Meadowvale office to somewhere around here in downtown Toronto.

Today, my constituency office is only a few hundred metres from that Meadowvale location, and it takes about 90 minutes to get to downtown Toronto, and I know all the shortcuts and all the alternate routes there are.

To compare our municipal and provincial infrastructure to our US counterparts used to be a source of pride for Canadians, especially Ontarians. No longer. Though some states are better than others, Ontario is being surpassed by many cities and states in the United States. In Asia and Europe, we'd be second-rate jurisdictions. Any visitor to Hong Kong, Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul or any world-class Asian city will tell you how infrastructure should look, feel and operate.

Ontario knows how to build roads, water systems, hospitals, schools and transit systems. We build them as well as anybody else. Now we have to grapple with how to pay for the infrastructure that we all share in ownership—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Excuse me.

A point of order, the member from Parkdale—High Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I would just ask what the member's comments have to do with the motion under consideration.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I think the member's comments are regarding transportation, and I don't feel he has gone astray.

Continue.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, does this mean—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If you have a problem with my decision—thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, does this mean that Ontarians need to own 100% of every public facility that we use all the time? Nowhere else in the world does the public insist that it needs to own 100% of everything it shares, yet this resolution asks exactly that.

How do we pay for what we need to build new, what we need to renew or repair? We could raise taxes. We could continue to borrow money. We could pay the private sector to build and operate our public infrastructure and services. Or we could find some money to build what we need, in money locked into what we already own.

The leader of the third party likes to compare Ontario to Quebec or Manitoba when she talks about our electricity system. Quebec draws upon a hydroelectric system that was largely built two generations ago. So does Manitoba.

Where has the growth happened in Canada in those past two generations? Have Manitoba and Quebec added more than five million people in those 40 years? Ontario has. Have other comparable jurisdictions had to do the equivalent of building the city of Kingston each and every year for all of those 40 years? In the GTA alone, Ontario has.

Through the recession, what did neighbouring US states do as the economy slumped? They laid off workers by the millions. Ontario didn't.

Ontario borrowed money during that time, a lot of money. Ontario borrowed money because the only option less palatable than borrowing that money was not borrowing it. It meant that Ontario recovered its lost recession jobs fully three years before our US cousins did.

Borrowing money isn't the right way to build the 21st-century infrastructure we need. Neither is taxation. We've worked our way, as a province, into being the most competitive jurisdiction in North America. We shouldn't forsake that competitive advantage as the NDP would do, just as they jacked up taxes in the 1990s.

In some parts of the world, major parts of our public infrastructure are delivered by the private sector. Ontarians don't feel that level of privatization would work in a society in which our geography and our population density dictate what is and isn't possible.

That leaves us to consider whether we should grow the size of our portfolio of public assets if some of the



ownership is shared, and if Ontarians continue to control and regulate how it is owned and how it operates.

1630

Most small businesses confront a similar problem in discussion with their partners, their advisers and their bankers, who often boil down the question to this: Do you want, as an owner, to own 100% of something smaller, or do you want to share the ownership of something bigger and more profitable with investors?

Ontario has never been a zero-sum game. Ontario is about growing as a people and growing as an economy. So do we need majority ownership or do we need control of the entity that is Hydro One? Clearly it is the latter and not the former.

For the transformation of our electricity system to be 99.7% carbon-emissions-free, for the public transit expansion and renewal that we need to continue to be Canada's engine of growth and North America's destination of choice for foreign investments, let's give our pension funds something to buy in Ontario. Let's share some of what Ontario owns with the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I appreciate yet another opportunity to talk about our skyrocketing hydro rates in Ontario and how we got there.

Quite frankly, I think the NDP motion is missing the real point. We all were on the pre-budget consultations, all three parties, not only this year but last year and every other year, for that matter. We saw it last year and we saw it this year: People throughout Ontario are desperate when it comes to their skyrocketing hydro bills. Whether it was the YMCA in a community or the social planning council, whether it was individuals like Jennifer in Ottawa, who I've talked about 100 times in this Legislature, or whether it was some of our largest industries, the skyrocketing hydro rates, the highest hydro rates in North America, are hurting our families, hurting seniors and hurting businesses.

Last year, we had 2,700 fewer businesses in Ontario than the year before. They're exiting Ontario. Families were lined up out here today talking about how enough is enough with the hydro rates. This is the real crux of it.

As the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke spoke of earlier, it's the Green Energy Act—the flawed, failed Green Energy Act. Incidentally, according to all of the experts—whether it's the Auditors General, both of them, in their 2011 and their 2014 reports, or all of the other organizations, the IESO and all—they tell us there's nothing green about the Green Energy Act.

We started off in 2009 with 25% of our power in Ontario coming from the cleanest, the greenest, the most reliable and—the key—the most affordable energy, water power. Here we are today, \$50 billion later, thanks to the global adjustment, the price that's paid, the difference between what we pay to have energy made and what we sell it for—\$50 billion was spent. Here we are with 25% of our power in Ontario coming from green energy. Water power is now reduced to around 22% and we've

seen wind power come up to 3%. So we're still at 25%. We haven't added one kilowatt of so-called green energy in Ontario more than we had when we started.

I was shocked, actually, this week; our current energy critic—and as a former energy critic and our other former energy critic, we can all three of us tell you that we were shocked to hear the minister say, "There's no more capacity for water power in Ontario. It's over." I'm thinking, "Oh, my gosh. Water power?" There are 2,200 potential water power sites in Ontario; 700 of them appear to be viable.

When talking about clean, green energy, we could talk about nuclear energy as well. In nuclear energy—56% of our power comes from nuclear, one of the cleanest, greenest energies in the world. So this flawed Green Energy Act—former energy minister George Smitherman told us, "Don't worry, it's only going to add 1% a year." Good heavens, Speaker. On the first day of May, the peak energy went up 15% in one day. It's going up another 9.8% or 10%, according to the Liberals, next November 1; it's going up again. And on January 1, they're rolling back the consumer benefit. We're talking about a 35% increase to families, peak energy, in a period of eight months. Oh, but Minister Smitherman? "Don't worry. This great, brilliant plan of ours will only cause energy to go up 1%."

So they put ideology ahead of the needs of the people. They put the needs of the renewables sector over and above the needs of seniors, families and businesses in Ontario. That's what we saw happen in all of Ontario.

So this is the real issue at the core of it: What the heck is happening to skyrocketing energy prices and what are these guys going to do about it? Now, so far, we know what they're going to do about it. They are adding more wind power. You know, back in 2006, the global adjustment was \$700 million that year. In 2011, the Auditor General said, "Watch out. This thing called the global adjustment is going to hurt your business." He estimated that global adjustment would hit \$8 billion. It was \$700 million. He estimated \$8 billion by 2014—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Per year.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Per year. And guess what? We hit \$7.7 billion. That Auditor General—unlike what the Minister of Energy thinks, that the Auditor General doesn't know anything about either math or energy—was almost bang on in a forecast years later.

That's what we've seen from these guys: skyrocketing energy rates, the highest energy rates in North America, which is hurting our businesses, hurting our families and hurting our seniors.

Thank you for the opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Oshawa.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand today in support of our opposition day motion.

As a teacher, I would like to shed a little light on the situation that we find ourselves in. We are on the verge of a new, Liberal-government-induced Dark Age, literal-

ly. Our province is on the brink of a time when families and businesses won't actually be able to afford to keep their lights on.

A bit of a history lesson, if I may: Just more than 100 years ago, Sir Adam Beck fought for public hydro. He was knighted because he championed affordable public power for the people. There's even a bronze statue in his memory not far from here, but perhaps this government is going to melt it down and sell it off to their friends, too, because one-time sell-offs seem to be their new thing.

Back to Sir Adam Beck, Mr. Speaker: There are actually schools named in his honour, schools that soon might not be able to pay for their electricity and, like so many others, might have to close when costs skyrocket and funding evaporates.

I came to this Legislature from a classroom, and I know how squeezed our schools already are. Hydro revenues, by the way, are used to fund education and health care. The Premier of this province and leader of the government of Ontario is actually undertaking to punch the lights out of the middle class and the business community and to make sure that our struggling economy can now look forward to struggling in the dark.

I would be more than happy to connect anyone in this room with my constituents who are still trying to pay bills from two winters ago. We've heard stories about people who are living in one room with one heater. Those are some of my families in Oshawa. This plan is tearing apart our public power and our future. This government is making a mockery of our democratic process. Shame on the Premier and shame on the Liberal caucus that isn't standing up to her and isn't standing up for their constituents.

This is an historic turning point. The government is flipping a switch on opportunity and growth in this province and doggedly clinging to a wrong idea. She's determined to go down with this ship and take all of us along with her. Shame on this government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure today to have an opportunity to respond to the opposition day motion and to speak about our plans to utilize Ontario's assets to build much-needed infrastructure.

As you know, in this budget there's an investment, over 10 years, of \$130 billion in infrastructure, and it's crucial that we get the proper goods and people to the places that they need to be efficiently and on time. We need to do this because we need to be able to have an economy that is competitive in the global environment.

Il est important que nous investissions dans le transport en commun et dans le transport. Il est crucial parce que nous obtenons des personnes et des biens à l'endroit où ils doivent être à l'heure. Investir dans l'infrastructure, c'est comment nous allons maintenir et développer notre économie.

1640

We've got a \$31-billion investment in public transit—\$16 billion inside the GTHA and \$15 billion outside. There are challenges inside my community of Ottawa South and Ottawa with public transit, but coming here two years ago and looking at the public transit challenges that exist here was a real eye-opener for me. I know that many of my colleagues in the Legislature who live close to here struggle every day to get in here to work and it eats up a lot of their day.

These investments that we're talking about here are about improving people's quality of life, but also making sure our economy can function efficiently and fully. While I appreciate the history lesson from the member opposite and her commitment to her position, I want to touch on something that was mentioned a bit earlier.

It is about choices. In 2008-09, when the government of the day had to make a choice about whether to continue to borrow money to make sure that those services that people depend on are there for them, those things that we built up, the government made that decision. They made that decision to make sure that we had jobs in the auto sector. The result of that decision was that we had to continue to borrow money to make sure those things happen, that those services were there.

It's important to remember that we're still doing that, but we have a need over here that's crucial to the functioning of our economy. If we don't, we have to make a choice. If we decide that we're going to delay it, we'll adversely affect our economy. The other solution may be greater taxation. What the government has done in terms of unlocking the value of this asset and putting in the protections that we have around that I believe is a prudent thing to do. I believe it's what we have to do to move forward.

I'd like to thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Hi, Speaker. I rise today on behalf of—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Hello, Mr. Bailey. The member from Sarnia-Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Good afternoon to you, Speaker. I rise today on behalf of the residents of Sarnia-Lambton to oppose this government's continued mismanagement of the Ontario energy system and the never-ending rate increases.

Since 2003, hydro costs have more than tripled under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal governments. Their very own long-term energy plan calls for a 42% increase in hydro bills over the next five years. Every day in my office I receive emails and phone calls from residents in Sarnia-Lambton—seniors, young families, middle-class families, single mothers, people living on disability support—who have done everything possible to reduce their energy usage, but are still facing unaffordable energy bills because of this government's ensuing, skyrocketing energy rates.



Local charities in Sarnia-Lambton like the Inn of the Good Shepherd, the St. Vincent de Paul Help Centre and the Salvation Army, among others, have been working hard to try and help those families who need assistance with their energy bills, but the demand is now so great because of this government's energy policy that the utility banks are now turning people away. Families are having to choose between heating and eating, Mr. Speaker. I know that's not the first time that term has been used in this chamber.

People in my riding are writing to my office to say that they live in fear of turning on a light or a TV during the day, or their air conditioning, because the cost of energy is out of control. Families are telling me in my office that during this past winter they had to choose between heating and eating.

This government's energy policy is an outright failure and now you are prepared to give away control of a crown asset, Hydro One, which will lead to even higher energy rates and saddle ratepayers with billions more in debt in order to support your high-spending addiction. Even the Liberals' own chairman of that committee, Mr. Clark, couldn't guarantee that energy rates wouldn't go up.

The Liberal government's privatization plan doesn't benefit the people of Ontario. It's a fire sale of public assets to pay for this government's spending daydreams in downtown Toronto.

Hydro rates are too high. All members of this Legislature need to be focusing on how we can lower energy rates and hydro rates. Anything else that's brought up here is factually a distraction.

Mr. Speaker, I call on this government to rip up its half-baked plan to give away control of Hydro One and instead focus on lowering energy rates for the residents of Sarnia-Lambton before another family in this province is thrown into energy poverty by this government's policy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm pleased to rise and talk on this.

I had the opportunity to go to Fort Erie during the budget hearings, and I can tell you not one person from the Liberal government raised selling Hydro. We want to keep it publicly funded and publicly delivered. When I listen to the PC Party talk about, "Well, we want to keep 50%"—any way you look at it, if you're keeping 50% or you're keeping 40%, you're selling publicly funded Hydro.

You take a look at seniors in the province of Ontario, and what they're going through today. They've got to choose between food, medication or paying their hydro bills. Think about that.

One of the speakers from the Liberal Party talked about manufacturing. Hydro rates are killing manufacturing in my riding. You take a look at Oshawa. They just announced 1,000 jobs. You don't think that had something to do with hydro rates not being competitive in the province of Ontario? And if you sell it, what's going to

happen? Those rates are going to go even higher. You're putting those jobs in jeopardy.

Just last week I had the hotel industry—which, by the way, might not be supporters of Wayne Gates as their MPP—but they called me and they said very clearly, "Gatesy, we have 14 million visitors come to Niagara Falls. The rates just went up from eight cents to 16 cents at peak time. What am I supposed to do during the day: shut off the air conditioning, shut the water parks down so the kids can't go in the pool? What are we doing in the province of Ontario when we're selling Hydro?"

I challenge any Liberal on that side to tell me that residents in your communities aren't coming to you and saying, "Don't sell Hydro, I can't afford to pay my hydro bill." There isn't anybody who can tell me that that's not happening in your ridings. Everywhere I go, it doesn't matter if it's a grocery store, it doesn't matter if I'm going to a hockey game, an IceDogs game—and this week I may go down and watch the Generals play—everybody is coming up to me and saying, "Gatesy, you've got to stop the sale of Hydro. We cannot afford it any longer. We must stop the sale of Hydro, and we can't wait three years to do it. We have to do it today." Come to your senses and stop.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak of our plan to utilize the value of some of Ontario's assets to help us fund essential infrastructure projects.

No economy, no government, can generate growth without investing in infrastructure. Our government understands this need to invest in infrastructure, and is therefore doing what is necessary to ensure the long-term growth and stability of an economy that benefits us all.

Our government is making the single largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history—\$130 billion over 10 years—to renew and expand public infrastructure. Infrastructure like new roads, bridges and transit that will link communities and move goods and people around this province faster and more efficiently. The competitiveness and success of Ontario's businesses depend on this network. Everyone knows, Mr. Speaker, that congestion and pollution cost the economy billions of dollars directly and indirectly.

Infrastructure, like an education system, inspires leading-edge research and sets the stage for our future economic success and long-term sustainability.

Our government remains committed to significant, strategic investments in our schools, roads, bridges, transit and transportation, universities, colleges and research facilities to foster a well-educated workforce, to build research and innovation capacity and to create job growth.

Critical infrastructure must respond to demographic changes, not just now, but also in the coming years and generations.

Our government's investments in health infrastructure will support the goal of delivering good care when and

where people need it, and protecting the health system for future generations.

Infrastructure investments help support sustainable water systems, protect our landscapes and our environment.

Investments in tourism and cultural infrastructure and investments in social infrastructure help ensure all Ontarians have the resources and tools to achieve a better quality of life and to take part more fully in society.

**1650**

Our government's \$130-billion infrastructure plan has been widely applauded as being bold in its vision, but it will be measured and pragmatic in its implementation. That measured approach includes maximizing our assets so that we can build this badly needed infrastructure. Indeed, this was a part of the 2014 Liberal Party platform. The people of Ontario voted on our budget.

Now, I understand that the opposition's and the third party's role is to criticize and frame matters of the day in terms of their own priorities and in ways consistent with their own ideology.

In summary, our government has been clear about broadening the ownership of Hydro One to create lasting benefits for all Ontarians while at the same time being vigilant in protecting ratepayers.

Our government will retain considerable control over the management of the utility's finances. We will remain the largest shareholder, with a 40% share, and no other shareholder will own more than 10%. We will nominate 40% of the board of directors, and we will have the power to dismiss the board. All of Hydro One's board are required to live in Ontario, with the grid control and head office remaining in Ontario. Hydro One will not have the power to set the rates. That will continue to be the responsibility of the independent Ontario Energy Board.

As MPPs, we are all here to represent the best interests of our constituents. I submit that our government's long-term infrastructure plan, utilizing, as it does, the release of certain provincial assets, will provide the critical infrastructure that Ontarians will benefit from for generations to come.

Now, just in case you missed it, Mr. Speaker, it was the member for Hamilton Centre herself who had the same plan in her platform during the last election. She even said in an interview on May 7—less than a week ago—on Newstalk1010 that “there’s no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns. I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that.”

So the leader of the third party recognizes the value of unlocking government assets such as Hydro One. I’m also quite sure that the leader of the third party does not object that, just in the Hamilton region alone, we will invest \$13.5 billion over 10 years and increase weekly GO rail trips from 1,500 to 6,000.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Have we all got it out of our systems now, all the yelling and pointing? The member from Kitchener—Waterloo is on a roll.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Yes, well, we’ll cut it back, won’t we? Thanks so much.

*Continue.*

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Furthermore, unlocking the value of assets allows for this unprecedented investment in other types of infrastructure across the province—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Hamilton Mountain and the member from Oshawa.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** —and I know that the constituents of Hamilton Centre do not object.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I’d say thank you, but I’m not sure. Thanks so much.

Further debate? The member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** And now for something a little different.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** No, I’m not.

The fact is, of course, that the NDP have brought forward this opposition day motion today: “That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario must abandon its plan to privatize Hydro One and maintain public ownership in this strategic asset to avoid losing annual hydro revenues used to fund education, health care and other vital services; to avoid hydro rate increases related to privatization; and to retain public control over Ontario’s energy future.”

Mr. Speaker, as you’ve heard, our caucus is not going to be voting for this motion today. We have, obviously, a different take on this issue. But we do also stand in opposition to the government’s energy policies, going back to the Green Energy Act.

In fact, I had the privilege of being the first speaker from our caucus on the Green Energy Act bill when it was first introduced in the Ontario Legislature back in February 2009.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The third party whip.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Even though we had very little time to review it, it would seem strange that the Minister of Energy of the day didn’t even offer the opposition an opportunity for a briefing on the bill before it was called for second reading, and I think it was called for second reading literally two days after it was first introduced in this House. We had very little opportunity to review it, but certainly we raised concerns during question period.

At the time, the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke was our energy critic, as he is today, and he raised concerns, but I had the chance to speak first for our caucus and I said, “We believe hydro bills will go up dramatically under this approach”—in other words, the Green Energy Act. I quoted our party’s critic, the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, as he said in the House the day before—that would have been the Febru-



ary 24, 2009—that “hydro bills for Ontario customers are likely to skyrocket.” At that time, he said, “as much as 30%.”

At the same time, the Minister of Energy of the day was saying that he estimated that hydro bills would go up about 1% a year because of the Green Energy Act. What a bunch of baloney. The fact is, that particular minister is no longer here to answer for his policies, but many of his colleagues who sat in the House in those days—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It appears the member from Kitchener–Waterloo—you know, I’m looking for a replacement right now. Would you like to come up here and take my place for a couple of minutes? Thanks so much. Enjoy.

No, you usually bow before you sit down.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Catherine Fife):** Okay. Yes, it’s fine.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My speeches don’t normally provoke that sort of a reaction. But it is wonderful to have someone in the chair to listen to my comments on this particular opposition day motion.

My colleague the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke led off our debate this afternoon and he said that our caucus’s position is this: We need to retain majority ownership of Hydro One. We need to have a value-for-money audit to ensure that whatever is done is in the best interest of the taxpayer. We need to involve the Financial Accountability Officer as well as the Auditor General in that. And whatever money is generated should go to pay off the electricity debt in the province of Ontario.

As you know, Madam Speaker, the Liberal government announced this year that they intend to sell controlling interest in Hydro One. By selling 60% of Ontario’s hydro shares, they anticipate that the proceeds of the sale will be approximately \$9 billion. They have said that they plan to restrict any single shareholder from owning more than 10% of Hydro One so that the government will remain the largest single shareholder. They say, of course, that they’ll control rates through the Ontario Energy Board. That is their position.

Our caucus has raised concerns about this plan in the House many, many times. The government claims they will use a large portion of the money to fund infrastructure projects, but based on their track record we don’t believe them.

It’s my understanding that Hydro’s debt currently is approximately \$27 billion. You would think that a responsible government would begin paying off that debt before allocating the proceeds of the sale to other uses. However, this government is even changing the law in the budget bill so that they don’t have to use all of the proceeds to pay down Hydro One’s debt.

Our interim leader, when he was Minister of Energy, built into the Electricity Act a provision that would have required any proceeds of the sale of Hydro One to pay down the debt. We believe that is the responsible policy. The government rejects that idea and wants to use that

money for other uses. Unfortunately, it hasn’t even made a firm commitment to put the money in a dedicated fund for infrastructure, even though they say that they will put the money into infrastructure.

This Liberal government appears intent on selling off Hydro One because they need the money after years of overspending, waste and mismanagement. This year, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One generated over \$1 billion in profits which were turned over to the provincial government to fund programs. Should they continue down this path in selling controlling interest in Hydro One, much of that revenue stream will no longer be available to the government in future years, and this is something the government isn’t acknowledging.

**1700**

The government also needs to answer questions about what impact this will have on electricity rates, moving forward. As a result, the price of electricity in the province of Ontario has skyrocketed. Of course, on May 1, just a few days ago, we saw an increase of 15% in the peak power rate. It’s my understanding that it’s now 16.1 cents a kilowatt hour. When they first took office, the price of hydro was 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour. It has skyrocketed under their policies and under their approach, and as we all know, all of us as MPPs constantly receive expressions of concern from constituents who are afraid to open their hydro bills, who believe that the price of hydro has become exorbitantly expensive. And they’re absolutely right.

Under the Liberals’ watch, Ontario has become one of the highest-cost jurisdictions for electricity. Not only has this had a negative impact on Ontario families—in particular, our seniors and low-income residents—but it has also made it increasingly difficult for Ontario businesses to compete. As you know, Madam Speaker, as the price of hydro has skyrocketed, we have lost coincidentally with that about 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

There was a time when the province of Ontario sold Ontario as a preferred location for manufacturing investment, based on the fact that we had inexpensive hydro rates, and it was very successful. Through the years—through the 1940s and 1950s and 1960s—Ontario became a manufacturing mecca in the world, largely because of our competitive energy rates and, of course, many other factors. But the fact is that energy rates were one of the prime selling points we used. Now we’ve lost that competitive advantage, and at the same time we’ve lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

Our PC caucus will be carefully monitoring and scrutinizing the sale of any hydro assets, to ensure that this government is held to account.

Again, Madam Speaker, I thank you for listening to me this afternoon. I hope your replacement comes back soon, to allow you to resume your seat, where you might want to sit. The fact is that this government has undertaken energy policies that have not been in the public interest, and have put considerable upward pressure on hydro rates and bills. They need to be held to account for their actions, and that’s what we do today.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Catherine Fife):** The Chair recognizes the member from Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I must say how nice it is to see a woman in the Speaker's chair.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to talk about some of the points that came up from the government side earlier in debate. They talked about the government knowing how to build roads and schools. The member from Kingston and the Islands talked about how they're committed to strategic investment in schools. Then they went on to talk about unlocking assets.

I'd like to talk about their commitment to our education system. They know how to build roads and schools. They also know how to close schools: 88 schools have been closed. They like to talk about building new schools: one new school. How many schools were closed in order to build that one new school? They've set aside \$750 million to consolidate schools, a fund specifically for closing schools.

**Interjection:** Hmm.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Hmm.

You know, a few years ago the minister herself talked about the importance of not privatizing hydro; the adverse effect that would have on the education system. That hasn't changed. I'm not sure why her opinion has changed, but that hasn't changed.

I can tell you, as a former school board trustee—and the Minister of Education should know this from her time as a trustee—that hydro rates have actually gone up, and the budgets for schools have not kept in line with that. Spin it any way you want: If we privatize hydro, the cost is going to rise, and that's going to be an undue hardship on school boards that already have stretched budgets.

My constituents—my riding specifically is very diverse. We have some who come from higher-waged jobs; we have those who are also low-income. To sell off hydro would adversely affect the people in my riding, and I can guarantee that none of you have come to my riding and spoken to my constituents.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I'm very excited at the prospect of having the opportunity to speak to the motion today. I suspect that to some members, particularly from the NDP caucus, I'm going to sound like a tiny bit of—I'd say "a broken record," but instead I'll say "repetitive record," because over the last couple of weeks I've had the opportunity—in fact, I think I was in a position last week, quite proudly, to talk about the convenient mythology that emanates consistently, day after day, from members of that particular caucus.

But today, through this motion and some of the debate that they've provided, some of the contribution that they've made to the discussion this afternoon, they've kind of taken it to a new level, which I know for people watching at home is a little bit hard to believe.

I've got to tell you, beyond the convenient mythology that we hear consistently from members of that party—in particular, though, the leader of that party—today it's

more about the inconvenient truth. I had the opportunity to hear my colleague from Kingston and the Islands speak so eloquently and bring that truth to this discussion this afternoon, which I know is very difficult for members of that particular party, for that particular caucus, to hear.

Of course, there's been a lot of discussion, both in question period and in debate, about the fact that they feel very uncomfortable with what was in fact contained in their own election platform last year. I don't blame them for feeling uncomfortable. Of course, it was, after all, an 11-page manifesto that was so soundly rejected by the people of Ontario last June 12. So it's understandable that they would be so eager to run away from what was clearly such thin gruel.

But beyond that, when I look over at that caucus and I see people who represent communities from the north, from urban areas in the GTHA, from Hamilton and beyond, I, for the life of me, Speaker, cannot understand why they would not want to stand with this Premier and this government to invest in infrastructure that's so important to the quality of life that the people they represent look forward to having, but also for the kinds of investments and infrastructure that will build a stronger economy and create jobs.

For example, just in the last few weeks, I've had the privilege of announcing that we are going to forward with the \$1.6-billion Hurontario-Main LRT. I proudly stood alongside the Premier of Ontario, the most progressive Premier in Ontario history, and the fantastic member from Barrie to announce a \$13.5-billion GO regional express rail plan. That will help communities like Oak Ridges-Markham, like Newmarket-Aurora, like Barrie, like so many others, including some—like Brampton and Bramalea—that the members over there represent. For the life of me I can't understand why they wouldn't want to stand with us, why their leader wouldn't want to show leadership, stand with us, stand with our Premier, because we're building up these communities.

In our budget, as we've talked about in the past, we're talking about supporting highway construction and expansion all over the province of Ontario, in the north and in remote communities as well. Again, for the life of me, reading this motion and listening to the consistent contribution they make in debate and during question period and when they talk to media, for the life of me I don't understand—and, more sadly, I would guess that the people they represent do not understand—why you do not want to support communities like Kitchener-Waterloo, communities like Hamilton, communities like Niagara Falls, communities like Algoma-Manitoulin, communities like Bramalea-Gore-Malton, communities like Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and so many others.

Our budget, our plan for infrastructure, specifically—you know the numbers and the people across Ontario know the numbers, because they embraced those numbers last June 12, 2014. When we won a majority government, they gave us the mandate to proceed over the next decade with investing \$130 billion in crucial infrastruc-



ture—\$31.5 billion for transit, transportation and other critical forms of infrastructure. That's a plan. It's an ambitious plan, but it's a plan that's commensurate with the ambitions of the people of Ontario. It's why we won last June. It's why you lost and you just can't let it go.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** You can't even get a light at an intersection. What are you talking about?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'll tell you what I can get done. No more across-the-floor stuff. I've had it.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Tell the truth, then.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And I don't need any more from you.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And I don't need any more from you. That's enough.

Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in the House today. I guess there's a lot of baloney going around today.

When I'm at home, people come up to me and they ask how I do this: "How do you listen to the other side and put up with it?" They talk about the mess hydro's in. Rates have almost tripled since this government took—almost tripled. We're looking at, what, another 42% over five years, and they're bragging? They brag about how much they're saving because it's less than we thought it might be? Obviously, they don't know, because every time they put out another five-year plan, every few months, it's different.

1710

Global adjustment cost \$50 billion over the last 10 years. Imagine what you could do with \$50 billion. You could have a brand new nuclear site sitting here, paid for.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** You could plow the roads in the winter.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Yes, you could probably afford to pay for the plowing in the winter. You talk about the baloney. We sit here—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay. The hammer is coming down, folks. The next outburst from those particular two, you'll be named. I'm getting serious now. I've had it.

Continue.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** We have a document showing they cut the plows by almost 50%, and they stand there and blame it on the former government. The member from Wellington—Halton Hills talked about baloney. That's what we're talking about here—lots of it.

My seatmate's company—the global adjustment cost for a small company was over \$50,000 a month. It was over 60% of the bill. They don't understand what's happening. No wonder people are leaving. Xstrata: 700 jobs. They were very clear: cost of power. It's an input cost we just can't afford.

We listened to the minister this morning talk about the rates increasing last week. He mentioned 4%; it's 15%. I hope it was his math that was wrong. I hope it's just not the story he's giving us. Then he turned around and blamed the blackout on the former government, when his own commission was very clear what the issue was: It with a problem that started down in the States.

We see this, we look at the costs and we wonder why electricity rates have gone crazy. Well, just start doing some of the basic math. You've got the Green Energy Act, \$50 billion; you've got the gas plant cancellation, another \$1 billion. Who's paying for that? The ratepayers are paying for that. They have no problem making political decisions and passing it on to the ratepayers. But our rates now, our middle-of-the-night rates, are more than the Quebec peak power rates. So in the middle of the night when we're sleeping, our rates are more expensive than Quebec's during their peak times.

You talk about money. It's great to say that you're putting money in infrastructure. You've got almost \$65 billion more each year in revenue—not counting hydro, just revenue—on what you're collecting and you still don't have money to put into infrastructure. You're doing things like selling Hydro One because you're out of cash? It's sad, and the province of Ontario just can't afford you any longer.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** C'est inconcevable qu'on soit en train de parler de la privatisation de notre système d'électricité. On a besoin de notre système d'électricité comme un outil de développement économique qui va nous permettre, pour tout de suite et pour les générations à venir, d'être maîtres chez nous. Ce qu'on est en train de faire est une erreur qui, une fois qu'on l'a faite, est un aller sans retour. On ne pourra pas changer ça.

Est-ce qu'il y a eu des problèmes avec le système d'électricité? Absolument. J'ai des centaines de gens dans Nickel Belt qui ont des plaintes, mais on était capable d'aller à l'ombudsman. Après la décision, il n'y en aura plus d'ombudsman. Il n'y aura plus de vérificatrice générale. Il n'y aura plus d'accès à l'information comme on avait avant.

C'est un aller sans retour qui est une grave erreur. On doit arrêter ça et le plus tôt sera le mieux.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It gives me great pleasure to follow on the heels of my colleague the Minister of Transportation and his rousing defence of infrastructure expenditures we're making in this province. I keep hearing from the members of the third party, and it's in this motion, that we're not listening to the people of Ontario. I mean, it's as if you have forgotten June 12. It's as if you have forgotten what happened on February 5, because we very—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I guess the back row there is a little hard-of-hearing—what I said last time.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker.

In the budget that was rejected by the party opposite, forcing the election, we very clearly set out that we were going to review the assets. Let me just read for you, Mr. Speaker, for the record. This is on page xx of the preface, and it says: “Le gouvernement envisagera d’optimiser et de dégager la valeur des biens qu’il détient actuellement, y compris les avoirs immobiliers et les sociétés de la Couronne telles que l’Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One et la Régie des alcools de l’Ontario ... En vendant ses parts dans la société General Motors, le gouvernement peut réinvestir cet argent dans les nouveaux projets d’infrastructure...”

This is so clear—in my French—that what we were saying here—“envisagera” means “we are envisaging.” We are envisaging a process where we will review the assets. This is the mandate given to us by the people of Ontario on June 12.

Lo and behold, we engaged Ed Clark—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Last warning, member from Hamilton Mountain. Last warning for the back row. The member from Nickel Belt was stirring it up, too. I’ve had enough. The next person is going—last warning.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker.

Lo and behold, we engaged Ed Clark and his commission to review this. We did a public consultation through Ed Clark, and in the midst of the public consultation, we had another election, a by-election, in which, once again, the policies of the parties opposite were soundly rejected.

The reality is—and I’ve been out. I had a town hall meeting just last night in my riding. I went out to a town hall, and about 45 members of my community came out. Except for the five card-carrying members of the NDP who were there from the leader of the opposition’s office—aside from those who were directly there as card-carrying members of the NDP, there was tremendous support for the direction that we’re taking here. People recognize that we’re not in a position to be borrowing the money in order to go forward with this. Because of the very close spread between what we can borrow and the expectations of investors, unlocking value in Hydro One makes tremendous sense. That’s why we’re moving forward with it. So I heard tremendous support last night at my public meeting.

I would sincerely hope that all members can rally. We should not support this motion because it takes us down an absolutely wrong path.

The people of Ontario have spoken. It’s the right thing to do now, and it’s the right thing to reject this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It’s a privilege to rise today. Of course, right off the bat, I will say that we will not be supporting this motion.

In the great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, we’re noted for our agriculture and our fertile land. We grow great cash crops. We also grow great industrial wind turbines. We have over 600 of them there. Of course, with this government and the ludicrous subsidies that they are paying Samsung and other companies down in my riding and throughout this province, to pay for their broken Green Energy Act—it’s a huge concern not only of mine but also of the constituents in the riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex.

There is even talk right now that another industrial wind turbine company is going to be wanting to plant industrial wind turbines in and around the Leamington area. I’ve had discussions with local authorities down there, and I’ve strongly recommended that they don’t agree to such ludicrousness.

As I mentioned before, hydro rates are on the rise. I look back to when I first came into office, back in October 2011, and let’s fast-forward to today, and the peak hydro rates have actually increased by 49.1%. You know what? They’re not getting lower; they’re actually getting higher. To say that the Green Energy Act is a success would be an absolute lie. It is not a success; it is broken.

We take a look at what companies—my colleague had talked about the global adjustment—are actually paying in terms of global adjustment fees. Once again, this government talks about the importance of creating jobs, but in fact, they’re saying that out of the one side of their mouth, whereas on the other side of their mouth, they’re actually forcing businesses to leave Ontario. When businesses leave Ontario, not only does that hurt the economy, but then, all of a sudden, the unemployment rates skyrocket.

They can talk about all the jobs that they’ve ever created in the public sector, but I’m looking at private businesses and the jobs that hard-working, unionized, non-unionized employees are losing because companies are closing the doors and leaving Ontario. That is not right; that’s disgraceful. This government should be embarrassed by that as well.

1720

The Liberals talk about change, but in fact, what they’re really talking about is charge: charging hard-working Ontario taxpayers more and more for their hydro rates. They’re charging them more, and that is not right.

You know, it’s interesting. We talk about this selling-off of Hydro One. My understanding is that it’s a \$26-billion debt that Hydro One has, and the law says that if you do sell off any portion of it, what happens is that all that money must then go directly towards paying off that debt.

Well, I’m hearing that the Premier has decided to rewrite some of the laws, and that not all of that—the number I’ve heard is that \$9 billion is not going to go towards paying down that \$26-billion debt. In fact, what’s going to happen is she’ll take \$5 billion of that \$9 billion, put it towards the debt, but take the other \$4 billion and apply it towards her infrastructure promises.



Speaking of promises, and I'm going to finish with this, Speaker, my people down in Leamington, back in 2011, were promised transmission lines to help feed the greenhouse industry down there. A former Minister of Finance, Mr. Dwight Duncan, had said, "We are going to get that done." Well, that was in 2011; this is 2015. I think it's safe to say it's a broken promise, and now the Leamington people are up in arms, because companies are in fact expanding—in Ohio. They are missing out on investment opportunities.

With that, Speaker, I'm just going to close and simply say that this government has got to get their priorities straight. Their priorities are headed in the wrong direction, and they're heading Ontario in the wrong direction. Instead of climbing to the top of the mountain, we're soaring to the very bottom of the valley—and that is not true.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Since this Liberal government refuses to hear the voices across Ontario, I've got to bring the voices forward from Algoma-Manitoulin.

Hillspoint and Manitouwadge are saying no to your sale of Hydro One. White River and Hornepayne: No to the sale of Hydro One.

Dubreuilville, Wawa, Chapleau: ils disent non à la vente de l'hydro.

Prince, Goulais River, Gros-Cap, Harmony Beach: No. Searchmont, Aweres, Heyden: No. Echo Bay, Laird: No. Johnson, Tarbutt, Plummer, Bruce Mines, Bruce Station, Wharmcliffe: No. Richards Landing, Hilton Beach, Jocelyn: No. Thessalon, Iron Bridge, Blind River, Sprague, Algoma Mills: No. Elliot Lake: No. Spanish, Massey: No. Webbwood, Espanola, Nairn Centre: No.

Are you getting a message here?

Little Current, Kagawong and Mindemoya say no. Gore Bay, Meldrum Bay and Evansville say no. Spring Bay, Silver Water, Tehkummah, Big Lake and Sandfield say no. Manitouwadge and Killarney say no.

Have you consulted with the First Nations? No, you have not. Have you consulted with Hornepayne, Pic Mobert, Missanabie Cree, Michipicoten, Fox Lake, Brunswick House, Thessalon, Batchewana, Garden River, Mississauga, Serpent River, Sagamok, Whitefish River, Aundeck Omni Kaning, M'Chigeeng, Wikwemikong, Sheguandah, Sheshegwaning, Zhiibaahaasing?

Mr. Speaker, I've been everywhere in my riding and I've heard from everyone, and they are saying no to the sale of Hydro One. Stop your wrong-minded decision.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate. Further debate? Last call.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm standing up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, one of your people was in the way. I couldn't see you. I wonder who.

Thornhill.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I was going to say, I know it's hard to tell when I'm standing or sitting.

Mr. Speaker, I think it won't come as a big shock to anybody here that I'm hearing from constituents—certainly people all over York region—that they are paying more on their hydro bill than their mortgage for the first time in their life, for the first time in any generation of their family. I don't know what to tell them—and that's what I want to ask the government. I'm sure they're hearing from constituents as well. What do we tell people who are struggling to pay for electricity, when we live in a country with such vast resources, where it was one thing that was taken for granted almost when I was growing up, that Canada has an abundance of fresh water and an abundance of—

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** Cheap electricity.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I don't like to use the word "cheap"—inexpensive, affordable—I think is the word—electricity.

I have constituents in my riding who have seen family businesses close because it's just not realistic to pay three times the hydro rate that they paid only 10 years ago, and keep the family business running. They're not going to work when they're not making a profit. That's not what businesses do. Actually some of these businesses tried to carry on because they thought, "It can't last forever," that the government was going to solve the "electricity affordability crisis" is how they would term it. They tried to keep these family businesses running for the sake of the employees because the business was only worth what the property was worth at a certain point, and they feel that these employees are almost like their family, but it comes to the point where employers aren't going to keep a business running merely for the sake of the employees.

Mr. Speaker, I appeal to this government to work with this side of the House to find the solutions that are obviously out there and bring back affordable energy to the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's an honour to rise today to talk on this motion. While I'm a little concerned that the motion wording is a little off the mark, I'm nonetheless pleased that we are being given an opportunity to discuss what I think is probably the number one issue in my constituency right now, and that is the high cost of hydro, with no end in sight, quite frankly. We see decision after decision being made at the political level that is directly impacting people's cost of hydro. It doesn't matter if you're a homeowner, it doesn't matter if you're a senior on a fixed income, it doesn't matter if you're a manufacturer or a small business—everyone is being hurt by these policies that are impacting and increasing hydro rates across Ontario.

One constituent contacted me about their personal hydro situation. He received seven separate bills in the month of March, ranging from \$2,400 to \$3,700. He's on equal billing and has automatic withdrawals. His average bill would normally be about \$300 a month. He's been in contact with Hydro One to sort out the situation. But,

honestly, seven bills in one month? Clearly, there are issues.

I heard from another constituent who just can't keep up. As the rates continue to rise, they are not able to have an increase in their income that allows them to continue to pay higher and higher costs. In all the cases my office has heard this year, bills that have gone unpaid are well over \$1,000, and the story we continue to hear is that customers are paying what they can, but they simply can't keep up.

One woman, in January, owed Hydro \$9,000 and Hydro was asking for a payment of \$4,700 by the end of the day or they would put a load limiter on. At the end of the day, she was able to come up with \$1,000 and, with my office's help, Hydro was willing to give her another week to pay \$3,700—not an easy thing for a family on a fixed income to deal with.

When I became an MPP in 2007, I might get one hydro call a month. I'm getting one or two a day now. The dramatic shift in how much people are being expected to pay and forced into these untenable situations has to stop, and one way to do that is to stop doing these social experiments that are causing the high costs of hydro.

I'll leave it at that because I know many of my colleagues are interested in sharing their stories as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm pleased to be able to rise and use up the balance of our time today. I wasn't planning on speaking.

I do apologize for my outbreak earlier with the Minister of Transportation. I couldn't believe his speech. It was absolutely unbelievable, in my opinion. We can't even get a light at the intersection of Fairgrounds Road and Highway 12, and he's out there spending billions of dollars on all these projects that will likely never, ever happen.

1730

That's exactly what this is really all about. This is one shell game, as we've said, the whole budget is. It's a bit of a joke. They're spending billions of dollars. They have no idea how they'll finance it. What they're going to do is sell off Hydro One, and they think that that's going to be the be-all and end-all and that will be wonderful. You know what? We've seen 12 years of mismanagement by these people—12 years now.

My son-in-law is in the audience today. He runs a fairly large manufacturing plant. The reality is—he just told me a few minutes ago—that the bills are fluctuating \$30,000 a month with hydro. Can you imagine how someone actually operates a business with fluctuations of \$30,000 a month?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** How can you plan?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** How can you plan anything?

But you know what? They sit over there as a cabinet pretending they actually know something. What do they do? They're driving jobs out of this province. Gates said it right. Why has General Motors left Ontario? Why has the Camaro plant left? You know why they've left: be-

cause of hydro costs. It's absolutely the main reason, and all the other red tape that comes with everything—the crazy things that have happened at the College of Trades and all those nutty things that we've seen for months and months and months, and now 12 years of Liberal mismanagement. This is just one more mess.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** You know what? We're not even going to get into the education field, because that's going to be for tomorrow.

But the reality is, Mr. Speaker—you know and I know, and I think even all the members of the opposition here know—that this sale of Hydro One is a disaster. It has been poorly planned. The debate is a joke.

It's almost as bad as Bill 10, the Child Care Modernization Act. Nothing happened there in debate. Imagine, on Bill 10, what did they do? They time-allocated the clause-by-clause.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Yes, you got that right.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words.

Again, I apologize to the Minister of Transportation—because he couldn't get that light up at Fairgrounds Road and Highway 12.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to stand and talk to this motion that New Democrats have brought forward today.

It's time that the government listened to what Ontarians are saying. We've been doing so much work on this side of the House. Over 30,000 people have responded online, saying, "Please stop this." My office is constantly inundated from seniors, from families, from businesses saying, "Please stop this." I don't know how it's possible that the government side cannot have these kinds of calls and emails to their offices. It just doesn't make sense.

They need to stop this process. They need to backtrack. Less than 3% from our hydro sale is going to go into transportation—less than 3%. What difference is that going to make? It's a drop in the bucket compared to the actual cost. They found the dollars to move forward on the transit project. Less than 3% is not going to make a difference.

Please stop this and backtrack and do what the people of Ontario are asking you to do. Do not sell off our hydro.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm happy to have the opportunity here to speak in response to the motion that is before us today, the plan to utilize Ontario's assets in a way that creates important value for average Ontarians and helps us fund important infrastructure projects.

I was listening very carefully to the member for Algoma-Manitoulin when he was talking about his communities saying no to this and no to that, community after community. My question to him is: Did his com-



munity say no to the expansion of Highway 11, to the doubling of Highway 11 and all the infrastructure that will be built in the North? I don't know what questions they ask to their citizens if they answer no to every opportunity that this government had to add to the infrastructure budget to help build infrastructure in different communities here in Toronto but also outside of Toronto.

In my community, my constituents are very happy to see that we are investing in light rail. For years, under the previous government, there was very little money provided to municipalities to help them to modernize their infrastructure. I get telephone calls on a regular basis in my riding; they want us to invest in Ontario Hydro because they feel that, yes, Ontario Hydro should remain a public asset, like it's going to be, but in partnership with the private sector.

For me, \$130 billion is a historic investment that will be invested in infrastructure in Ontario in the next 10 years. It's good news because investing today is investing in the future.

You go to other countries, especially in Europe, and you see the wonderful infrastructure—the public transit that they have. We should look to them for an example of how to plan and modernize and how to keep the infrastructure, especially the road infrastructure, in good repair—and always modernizing our infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to support the motion that is before us. I'm supporting the very visionary Premier we have. She has appointed a committee to help her to see how we can finance public infrastructure, especially the mass transit that we need. We couldn't borrow money. We could not increase fares. So what is the option that is left? Look at the infrastructure that we already have and see if we can get money out of it to invest in what is very much needed in our communities.

It's a very innovative way to do business. It's a visionary way that our Premier and our Minister of Finance have proposed in the budget. My community does support the massive investment in infrastructure.

With this, Mr. Speaker, I will leave the opportunity for someone else to speak.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, I urge everyone in this House to vote for this motion and block the sale of Hydro One. I urge you to vote to block the privatization of the broader hydro system because you have to understand that although Hydro One is the most visible part of what the Liberals are going after, they are demolishing the barriers that protect the local hydros from privatization: Toronto, Ottawa, Guelph, Windsor, Sudbury, Hamilton, London—all on the block.

Speaker, this is the largest privatization seen in this province perhaps in its history, certainly in decades, and it will resonate down through the generations, just as the setting up of the non-profit, publicly owned Ontario Hydro resonated down through the decades, allowing us to build an industrial society in this province. This is a

very big deal, and this is a very reckless act on the part of this government.

There are many levels of impact. My colleague from Nickel Belt talked about the loss of those economic development levers that we need to build this province. I'm going to speak first, though, to the impact on price because that people understand on a day-to-day basis.

I talk to my colleagues. My guess is, the other members talk to their constituents. They know that people have just got their nose above the waterline. They are being pressed hard, and this privatization will take that water above their noses. They will be under water.

**1740**

We don't have to go far to see what the impact of privatization is. We just have to look at Ontario. The Conservatives, under Mike Harris and Ernie Eves, set in motion the privatization of our hydro system. They set it in motion. The Liberals campaigned against it, but when they were elected, they continued with the privatization of generation, and we have seen the impact. Look at the rates on your bills. Look at the rates. We have seen a 300% increase since 2002—a big impact, Speaker. You don't have to look far. You don't have to go to Australia or New Zealand—take your pick. You can go look at the bills right here at home.

What has changed since the 1990s is the addition of hundreds of millions of dollars in profit that people have to pay on their hydro bills. TransCanada's annual report at the end of 2014 said that on their Bruce nuclear station, this private company, part owner of Bruce nuclear, got \$300 million in profit. They're about a one-third owner. I'm assuming the other two thirds of the owners got similar profits.

The cost that we didn't pay in the 1990s for power is somewhere between 600 million and a billion bucks a year. That matters. Year in, year out, it comes out of your pocket; it comes out of your purse; it comes out of your wallet. This government wants to accelerate that rate of transfer of money from our wallets, our purses, our pockets into the hands of some extraordinarily wealthy corporations.

It is the nature of this reconfigured, commercialized, privatized hydro system that the billions of dollars that are on the table will attract some very sharp operators, who will look to expand that pile of money, who will look to deepen the mining of our wallets, our purses, our pockets.

Speaker, what is being put on the table is a loss of control. The Auditor General will be out of the picture. The ability to look into something like the gas plant scandal will disappear. We've been told by the government, "Well, this new company will have auditors. They will look after things and make sure it's all fine." Some of you may remember the company called Enron that plundered the people of California about 15 years ago. Where did their auditors sit? They sat beside the shredder, Speaker, shredding corporate documents. That's why they were found guilty. This change puts us in a position

of vulnerability unprecedented in the history of this province.

The Ombudsman will be taken out. Yes, the government says, they'll have a company-controlled ombudsman, a glove puppet for the board of directors, not the bulldog that we have now who actually stands up to Hydro One when Hydro One abuses its customers.

People around this chamber have talked to the Ombudsman when they've had difficulty with Hydro One billing—no question. But that will be gone. The ability of the cabinet to talk to the leadership of Hydro One, the management, and say, "Your direction isn't working for this province. It's damaging us"—gone, because that private sector board of directors, the 60% owners, is going to operate in their own interests. So if they're in a hotel in Omaha one weekend, you know, the six big owners getting together, having a chat, saying, "How do we squeeze a little more money out of Ontario?"—we won't be able to stop them. We won't be able to stop them.

The Liberals say that the Ontario Energy Board can control the prices, just like we control insurance rates in Ontario. We can regulate that really well—no sweat. Mr. Singh, you can talk to that.

This privatization damages the infrastructure, the framework, that Ontarians put in place over a century to give us a decent standard of living and prosperity. It is being demolished in a reckless act by this government. It has to be stopped. I call on everyone in this chamber to vote for this motion and block the privatization.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this. I have listened with great attention to the passion with which the member for Toronto—Danforth just spoke, but let me take this moment just to remind the member from Toronto—Danforth that, notwithstanding his passionate criticism, this was what the leader of the third party, the leader of his party, said on May 7. She said this in an interview on Newstalk. This is the leader of the third party: "There's no doubt that we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns." And this is the important part of the quote: "I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that." What is the "that" she's referring to? The rationalization of Ontario's assets so that those assets are maintained, developed and used in the public interest.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I think some people weren't here a little while ago when I laid down the final gauntlet. So I would suggest—

**Interjection:** I was here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm glad you were here.

I suggest that we abide by that, because someone wouldn't want to be thrown out on a motion day.

Continue.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Speaker, I remain just dumb-struck, sitting here listening to the member for Toronto—

Danforth get all wound up and twisted into knots. He was almost on the verge of having a heart attack, but apparently he hasn't had any discussion with the leader of his party, or he didn't pay any attention to what the leader of his party said on May 7 on Newstalk. Just so you're reminded yet again—perhaps it'll calm down your nervous anxiety and your nervous breakdown—your leader said, "There's no doubt that we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns." The important part of the quote—now listen carefully. I want you to calm down. You were so wound up, I was worried about your health—"I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that."

Now, I urge you to take your leader's advice and do not be closed-minded. Keep an open mind—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Not only are you pointing and yelling, you're not going through me, and you're supposed to go through me. Not only that, you went on for another two minutes when I stood up, because you weren't paying attention and because you weren't looking at me. So, in the future, you go through me, and you don't point and yell at the opposition. Got it?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Well, I apologize for pointing at the member of the opposition, Speaker, and I will address my remarks through you to him.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And you won't be facetious, either.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** And I won't be facetious.

I was genuinely concerned about the contradictions in his statement. He's a member of that caucus and he takes a position on the front bench of that caucus which is diametrically opposed to the position of the leader of his party.

Now, that's a party that claims—I suppose they're in politics because they think they can govern the affairs of the province, but I have to wonder why the member opposite from Toronto—Danforth can't seem to get his thinking in line with the leader of his party.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Yes.

I think it's probably a good idea now to go through and say exactly what the legislation contemplates.

First of all, all we're doing is we're broadening the ownership of Hydro One to improve its long-term operational performance. We want to unlock billions of dollars in value for investments in major infrastructure projects that will help grow Ontario's economy for years to come.

Now, if you listen and pay attention to that quote and relate it back to what the leader of the third party said on May 7, those two statements are entirely compatible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's incredible, all right.

Further debate?



**Mr. John Vanthof:** People of Ontario, keep hydro public. It's a great asset to our province, has been for 100 years, and should be for the next 100.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's been a great day.

Ms. Horwath has moved that, in the opinion of the House, the government of Ontario must abandon its plan to privatize Hydro One and maintain public ownership in this strategic asset to avoid losing annual hydro revenues used to fund education, health care and other vital services; to avoid hydro rate increases related to privatization; and to retain public control over Ontario's energy future.

Is it the pleasure of the House that this motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those against, say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1751 to 1801.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Members, take your seats, please.

Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 4. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Arnott, Ted	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hudak, Tim	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hunter, Mitzie	Oraziotti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Jones, Sylvia	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Marie-France	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Smith, Todd
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Thompson, Lisa M.
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Vernile, Daiene
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Walker, Bill
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wilson, Jim
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	McDonell, Jim	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dunlop, Garfield	McGarry, Kathryn	Yakabuski, John
Fedeli, Victor	McMahon, Eleanor	Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 17; the nays are 72.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negated.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being past 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1805.*

#### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Sattler, Peggy
DiNovo, Cheri	Gretzky, Lisa	Singh, Jagmeet
Fife, Catherine	Hatfield, Percy	Tabuns, Peter
Forster, Cindy	Horwath, Andrea	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureur générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Soo Wong  
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permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
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Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi  
Todd Smith  
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permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
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des comptes publics**

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Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
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la politique sociale**

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Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











*Continued from back cover*

#### **Wearing of buttons**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris ..... 4366

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mr. Garfield Dunlop ..... 4367

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne ..... 4367

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Mr. Peter Tabuns ..... 4367

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne ..... 4367

Hon. Charles Sousa ..... 4368

#### **Agricultural trade**

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry ..... 4368

Hon. Michael Chan ..... 4368

#### **Hydro rates**

Mr. Todd Smith ..... 4368

Hon. Bob Chiarelli ..... 4368

Mr. Jack MacLaren ..... 4369

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky ..... 4369

Hon. Liz Sandals ..... 4369

#### **Rural economic development**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris ..... 4370

Hon. Jeff Leal ..... 4370

#### **Hydro transmission**

Mr. Rick Nicholls ..... 4370

Hon. Bob Chiarelli ..... 4370

Mrs. Julia Munro ..... 4371

#### **Air-rail link**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 4371

Hon. Steven Del Duca ..... 4371

#### **Manufacturing sector**

Mr. Arthur Potts ..... 4372

Hon. Brad Duguid ..... 4372

#### **Hydro rates**

Mr. Norm Miller ..... 4372

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne ..... 4372

Mr. Jim McDonnell ..... 4373

#### **Annual report, Chief Electoral Officer**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) ..... 4373

### **DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS**

#### **Time allocation**

Motion, as amended, agreed to ..... 4374

#### **Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015,**

**Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur  
l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la  
prosperité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid**

Second reading agreed to ..... 4374

#### **Visitors / Visiteurs**

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4374

Mr. Taras Natyshak ..... 4374

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur ..... 4374

Mme France Gélinas ..... 4374

### **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman ..... 4375

Mr. Chris Ballard ..... 4375

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 4375

Ms. Sophie Kiwala ..... 4375

Mr. Garfield Dunlop ..... 4375

Mr. Yvan Baker ..... 4375

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4375

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

#### **Naturopathic medicine**

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 4375

#### **Veterans' Place**

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 4375

#### **Naturopathic medicine**

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry ..... 4376

#### **Lyme disease**

Mr. Rick Nicholls ..... 4376

#### **Residential schools**

Mr. Michael Mantha ..... 4376

#### **Apology**

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri ..... 4376

#### **Mallorytown Glass Works**

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4377

#### **Éducation en français**

Mme Marie-France Lalonde ..... 4377

#### **Anti-bullying initiatives**

Mr. Chris Ballard ..... 4377

#### **Correction of record**

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 4378

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Ontario Flag Day Act, 2015, Bill 101, Mr. Baker /  
Loi de 2015 sur le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario,  
projet de loi 101, M. Baker**

First reading agreed to ..... 4378

Mr. Yvan Baker ..... 4378

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS  
MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

**National Nursing Week / Semaine nationale des  
soins infirmiers**

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4378
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4378
Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4379

**PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

**Hydro rates**

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4380
-----------------------	------

**LGBTQ conversion therapy**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4380
------------------------	------

**Water fluoridation**

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4381
-----------------------	------

**Hydro rates**

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4381
------------------------	------

**Ontario Disability Support Program**

Miss Monique Taylor .....	4381
---------------------------	------

**Realtors**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4382
------------------------	------

**Teachers' labour dispute**

Mr. Michael Harris .....	4382
--------------------------	------

**Hospital funding**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4382
--------------------------	------

**French-language education**

Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4382
------------------------	------

**Off-road vehicles**

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4383
--------------------------	------

**Hospital funding**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4383
--------------------------	------

**OPPOSITION DAY / JOUR DE L'OPPOSITION**

**Privatization of public assets / Privatisation des  
biens publics**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4383
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4386
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4387
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4388
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4389
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4390
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4390
Mr. John Fraser .....	4391
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	4391
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4392
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4392
Mr. Ted Amott .....	4393
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4395
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4395
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4396
Mme France Gélinas .....	4396
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4396
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4397
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4398
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4399
Miss Monique Taylor .....	4399
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4400
Hon. David Zimmer .....	4401
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4402
Motion negatived .....	4402



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 13 May 2015 / Mercredi 13 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015, Bill 45,**

#### **Ms. Damerla / Loi de 2015 pour des choix plus sains, projet de loi 45, Mme Damerla**

Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4351
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4353
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4354
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4355
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4355
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4355
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4356
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4356
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4359
Ms. Ann Hoggarth .....	4359
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4359
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4360
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4360
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4360

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4361
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4361
Ms. Ann Hoggarth .....	4361
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4361
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4361
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4361
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4361
Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4361
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4361
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4361
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4361
Mr. Michael Harris .....	4361
Mr. Paul Miller .....	4361
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4361
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4361
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4361
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4361
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4361
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4361
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4361

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4361
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4361
Mr. John Fraser .....	4361
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4361
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4362
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4362
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4362
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4362
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	4362
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4362
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4362
Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	4362
Mr. Norm Miller .....	4362
Hon. David Oraziotti .....	4362
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4362
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4362
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4362
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4362
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4362
Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4362
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4362
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4362

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### **Hydro rates**

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4362
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4363
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4363

#### **Hydro rates**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4363
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4364
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4364
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4364
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4364

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4365
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4365

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4366
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4366

*Continued on inside back cover*

25128











